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# ERRORS

# PAGES

Mudhakkarātī fī'l

page 14 line 7

Mudhakkarātī      underscored

page 14 line 16

Sa'd Zaghlūl      underscored

page 14 last line

Wādī'l-Nīl

page 19 line 3

'The Unrest in Egypt; Part II. Tales  
of the Omdeh,'      no underscoring

page 22 fn 6

the last line of fn 19 should read      and a nephew to A.J.Balfour page  
with one another      no punctuation after it

page 61 line 3

Ibn Su'ūd      no hyphen

page 70 line 8

corvée      underscored

page 81 line 11

corvée      underscored

page 82 line 13

corvée      underscored

page 84 line 2

£100 million      no coma between it

page 96 line 2

[Kitchener]      in brackets

page 107 line 1

Egypt

page 130 line 14

recommendation<sup>73</sup>.

page 135 line 10

November,

page 137 fn 78

fn 83 should be on page 138 not page 139

page 138 fn 83

add the word office to the last line

page 139 last line

[Graham]      in brackets

page 141 line 5

January 10

page 167 fn 51

Muhammad

page 175 last line

Tantā

Abāza

page 175 fn 69

passports.      add fullstop

page 190 line 7

fn 125 pp.149-50.

page 191 fn 125

fn 2 should read Chapter VI

page 193 fn 203

delete the word meet

page 235 line 4

may 22

234

SIR REGINALD WINGATE  
AS HIGH COMMISSIONER IN EGYPT  
1917 - 1919

by

JANICE JOLES TERRY

Thesis submitted for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy in the  
University of London, June 1968



### ABSTRACT

This study concerns Sir Reginald Wingate as High Commissioner in Egypt. It discusses his administration, connection with the Arab revolt, relations with the Foreign Office, and the reasons for his dismissal in 1919. Chapter I is devoted to a discussion of source materials with particular emphasis upon collections of private papers relating to the field. Chapter II recounts the situation in Egypt prior to Wingate's arrival and the events which led up to his appointment. Wingate's involvement with and consistent support of the Arab revolt are dealt with in Chapter III.

In Chapter IV the internal state of affairs in Egypt during the War is described. The various demands placed upon Egyptian resources by the military and the political events which occurred during the War are also discussed. Relations between British civil servants, Foreign Office officials, and Wingate were often tangled during these years. Wingate's involvement with the confusion in the administration, and his attempts to reassert his own control, are dealt with in Chapter V.

Chapter VI describes the growing nationalist agitation in Egypt after the Armistice, and Wingate's endeavours to have the British government offer concessions. These developments led to Wingate's departure in early 1919 for London, where he hoped to carry his recommendations concerning the

Egyptian national movement. His failure to do so and his subsequent supersession by Allenby are the subject of Chapter VII.

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I also wish to thank my parents for their constant encouragement and support.

SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

ט' (medial and final)	ט t
ב b	ב z
ט t	ע '
ח th	ג gh
י j	פ f
ח h	ק q
כ kh	כ k
ד d	ל l
ד dh	מ m
ר r	נ n
ז z	ה h
ס s	ו w
ש sh	י y
ש s	
ד d	א -a (-at in construct state)

NOTES ON ABBREVIATIONS

British Museum	BM
Foreign Office	FO
Hardinge Papers	HP
Milner Papers	MP
Private Papers Collection, St. Antony's College, Oxford	PPC
Public Record Office	PRO
Sudan Archive, Durham	SA

CHAPTER I  
SURVEY OF SOURCE MATERIAL

The following discussion of source materials concerning Egypt from 1914-1919, and more particularly to Sir Francis Reginald Wingate's High Commissionership, will be limited to a brief investigation of first-hand accounts, private papers, government archives, and newspapers. In the case of Arabic materials, which owing to the nature of the subject and scarcer documentary evidence are fewer in number and less well known than English language accounts, published memoirs, selected secondary sources, and newspapers will be noted. Arabic sources relating to the Arab revolt which is discussed in Chapter III are mentioned in passing. For convenience the remarks will be divided into two parts: the first dealing with British materials and the second with Arabic.

A. BRITISH SOURCES

I Public Record Office

(a) Foreign Office records: Series FO371 contains official correspondence and minutes from Egypt and the Foreign Office. FO141 series contains the embassy and consular reports, memoranda on finances and other Egyptian administrative problems, propaganda reports, and miscellaneous material concerning the Egyptian government.

(b) Cabinet records: CAB 21, 22, 24, 27 and several other Cabinet report series contain scattered references to Egypt and British policy in that country and in the Middle East. Most of these references deal with military questions; however, a few concern policy decisions and administrative problems.

(c) Collections of private papers:

(1) The Milner Papers, FO848, contain reports on the Milner Mission to Egypt in 1919-1920 and accounts on the finances and members of that Mission. The material contains many reports concerning events and financial affairs preceding and during the War.

(2) The Grey Papers, FO800/43, contain Grey's correspondence from 1912-1916. References to Egypt are few, but the letters concerning Egypt give a fair background into official British opinion and Wingate's appointment as High Commissioner.

(3) The Curzon General Papers, FO800/152, consist of letters written while Curzon was Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The bulk of Curzon's voluminous correspondence, on deposit at the India Office Library, is not yet open to the public. The handlist of that Collection reveals that there is some correspondence with and about Wingate between 1918 and 1919 among these papers.

(4) The Balfour and Cecil Papers, FO800, have a few references to the Middle East Department and the administration in Egypt.



(5) The Kitchener Papers, PRO30, contain a few remarks on the state of affairs in Egypt prior to Kitchener's departure. These bear a close relationship to the Mark Sykes Papers, FO800, which have some letters concerning the Arab revolt and British policy in the Middle East.

## II Private Collections

(a) Sudan Archive, Durham. This collection contains all of Wingate's private correspondence and many copies of official correspondence found in the PRO. Wingate assiduously saved his correspondence and kept copies of all letters which he wrote. These are organised according to date in indexed boxes. The material deals not only with Egypt, but also with the Arab revolt. While not keeping a diary, Wingate did make copious notes which have been preserved and attached to relevant letters or reports. He also kept first and second drafts of important letters or reports; these reveal the evolution of his thoughts and opinions.

The collection incorporates Sir Gilbert Clayton's correspondence during the War as well as Sir Lee Stack's. Also to be found there are Bishop Gwynne's diaries, a complete set of the Arab Bulletin, the Revue Sioniste, and the Annual Reports on Egypt from 1915 to 1920.

(b) The Milner Papers in the Bodleian contain Milner's correspondence between Milner and Osmond Walrond, Milner's former private secretary who was attached to the Arab Bureau during the War. The papers also contain the diaries of Milner's secretary, Hugh Thornton. Milner's diary on the Mission gives a daily account of the events which took place during the time the

Mission stayed in Egypt.

(c) The collection of papers at St. Antony's College in Oxford includes the diaries of Mervyn Herbert, Second Secretary of Chancery in Cairo during the War, and the unpublished manuscript on Egypt and Arabia by J.W.A. Young, a British civil servant in the Middle East from 1899 to 1925 who served in Jeddah during the War. His account is rather well written, and his narrative on the Ḥijāz government under the Sharīf is noteworthy.

(d) The Hardinge Papers in Cambridge University Library are well indexed. They contain correspondence between Wingate, Graham, and Hardinge and are of particular use for the latter.

(e) The Storrs Papers in Pembroke College Library, Cambridge, are collected in boxes by date, but they have no index. The bulk of Storrs's papers and writings was destroyed in a fire in Cyprus while he was High Commissioner, 1926-1932. However, some of the diaries kept on his journeys to Arabia remain, as do a few of his letters to his mother and personal friends. These letters provide light into Storrs's thoughts and opinions on the Egyptian administration and Wingate. For this reason, they are a useful source, but remain a rather neglected body of material. The letters form a supplement to the diaries which are, for the most part, quoted at length in Storrs's book, Orientations.

(f) The Balfour and Cecil Papers in the British Museum are well indexed, but they provide little additional material other than a few letters on the personal relationship between Balfour and Cecil. Cecil's papers have

obviously been carefully sorted; no letters from his brother, Edward, remain. The collection also contains a few letters from Curzon to Balfour. These dwell on Wingate's dismissal and his subsequent activities.

(g) The Lloyd George and the Bonar Law Papers are housed in the Beaverbrook Library in London. The papers are well indexed by individual names and by date. The Lloyd George papers contain a few memoranda on Egypt and the Middle East as well as letters and notes by officials and by Philip Kerr, Lloyd George's private secretary. The collection is of particular interest for the account by Edwin Montagu on his visit to Egypt in 1917. Bonar Law's papers contain a few letters on Wingate's dismissal.

(h) The Lothian Papers in the Scottish Record Office contain the correspondence of Philip Kerr. The second part of Montagu's account of his Egyptian tour and some scattered references to Egypt in general are found in the collection.

(i) The Chamberlain Papers in the Birmingham University Library are of use for the letters written by George Ambrose Lloyd, later High Commissioner in Egypt, while he was in the Intelligence Bureau in Cairo and Jeddah.

(j) The diaries of George H. Rose from 1914-1918, in the Essex Public Record Office, give an account of the life of a British soldier in Egypt during the War.

### III Newspapers

(a) The Egyptian Gazette was an English daily published in Cairo for the

benefit of British and foreign residents in Egypt. It reviewed the Arabic press and carried full coverage of British social functions and activities. It was the best of the British newspapers in Egypt and enjoyed a longer life than most of the papers which were generally short lived.

(b) Le Journal Officiel du Gouvernement Egyptien was the official government newspaper and was published in French with an occasional proclamation or new law in Arabic. This journal carried full accounts of the meetings of the Legislative Assembly, all new laws passed, and, during the War, all declarations or proclamations issued under martial law. It is a valuable source of information on the administrative and economic situation in Egypt.

## B. ARABIC SOURCES

### I Memoirs and Letters

(a) Muḥammad Anīs, Dirāsāt fī wathā'iq thawrat sanat 1919, deals in his introduction with the relationship between Sa'd Zaghlūl and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Fahmī and the organisation of the wafd in Egypt during 1919. The text contains the letters of Zaghlūl and Fahmī which were written while Zaghlūl was in Paris as the head of the Egyptian delegation to present the Egyptian demands for independence to the Peace Conference. The latter part of the collection contains scattered letters from 'Abd al-Raḥmān Fahmī to 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī and letters from other Egyptian nationalists as 'Umar Ṭūsūn. Anīs has annotated these letters.

(b) 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, in Hādhihi ḥayātī, offers his account of the

formation of the delegation led by Zaghlūl and the events during the War which caused Egyptian grievances. Fahmī's account is generally a fair one which does not overestimate the weaknesses or strengths of other Egyptian national groups. It is, however, clearly an account which gives Zaghlūl's viewpoint.

(c) Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal in his Mudhakkarātī fi 'l-siyāsa al-Misriyya discusses the growth of nationalism within Egypt from Muḥammad Abduh. For the most part, Haykal's account closely parallels Fahmī's, although the former may give more emphasis to the support of Zaghlūl by Rushdī and Sultan Fu'ād.

(d) In Ḥayātī by Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid the events leading up to the formation of a delegation are described. Luṭfī constantly corroborates Fahmī's account. Luṭfī's account is particularly useful for its discussion of the acceptance of the British Protectorate by Rushdī and other Egyptians.

(e) Ismā'īl Ṣidqī in his Mudhakkarāt seeks to justify his membership of the delegation under Zaghlūl and of his eventual repudiation of the wafd. It is not a full account and dwells primarily upon later years.

(f) 'Umar Ṭūsūn in Mudhakkarāt writes on the formation of the delegation in detail and gives interesting sidelights on the co-operation of the Egyptian princes with the nationalist movement. Ṭūsūn's account is well written and for the most part agrees with Fahmī's and Luṭfī's.

## II. Secondary Sources

(a) 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād in Sa'd Zaghlūl traces Zaghlūl's par-

ticipation in the delegation and his leadership of it. The account is favourable to Zaghlūl and is the only one which attempts to recount fully his life.

(b) 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Rāfi'ī devoted his life to the study of Egypt during the 19th and 20th centuries. Although his later works are not totally objective, his account of nationalism and the wafd in Egypt remains valuable. No other single source gives the student so complete an account of the 1919 events and of the personalities involved in the national movement. Al-Rāfi'ī, as a member of the wafd, was closely related to these events and was, therefore, in an excellent position to gather material, all of which has been included in Thawrat sanat 1919.

(c) Aḥmad Shafīq was closely involved with the Palace staff. His account, Hawliyyāt Miṣr al-siyāsiyya, reflects that fact. His work offers a good contrast to al-Rāfi'ī and accounts written by Zaghlūl's supporters.

(d) Amīn Sa'īd, in al-thawra al-'Arabiyya al-kubrā provides a history of the Arab revolt from its inception through the activities of the Peace Conference with regard to the Arabs.

(e) al-thawra al-'Arabiyya al-kubrā, edited by Sulaymān Mūsā, is a collection of documents, including the Ḥusayn-McMahon correspondence and other letters from the Sharīf, relating to the Arab revolt. It has recently been assembled and published by the Jordanian government. None of these documents are recent discoveries; indeed, most can be found translated into English in the PRO.

### III Newspapers

The Egyptian National Library (Dār al-Kutub) in Cairo contains an almost complete collection of newspapers and periodicals published during the relevant years of this study. These collections are catalogued in the Fihris compiled by Maḥmūd Ismā'īl 'Abd Allāh in a two-volume work which lists the newspapers by name, place of publication, editor, and year of publication. The following list contains a partial account of those papers which are most useful to the student of Egyptian and Arabian history during World War I. The relative merit of Egyptian newspapers, which were severely censored by the British, has been called into question by some historians of Egypt, but a careful perusal of the Egyptian press can give the student a fairly clear picture of the Egyptian grievances against British tutelage. The newspapers are also of help in showing where important personages were on a given day and in placing the British government and its officials in a proper perspective. In reading Egyptian newspapers published during this time the student should bear in mind that each newspaper was generally financed and supported by a particular interest group or politician. The newspapers do not generally give objective coverage of the news; rather they present a given point of view. During 1919 the newspapers were given a fair measure of freedom to express grievances against the British administration, economic plans, and the desire for Egyptian autonomy; however, more blatant complaints and anti-British editorials remained censored. Later newspapers contained accounts of the leading delegates who went to

Paris, and still later ones give detailed narratives of the formation of the delegation.

(a) Al-Ahālī, an Alexandrian daily, was edited by 'Abd al-Qādir Ḥamza who adopted a nationalist trend for the paper. Although a Coptic paper, al-Ahālī warmly supported the wafd and gave full coverage to its activities. From April 15 to June 19, 1919, the paper ran a series of personality sketches of the 14 delegates to Paris; these sketches are useful in gathering information on these Egyptians and their main interests.

(b) Al-Ahrām, a Wafdist Cairo daily, is the main source of information concerning the wafd and the growing nationalism within Egypt. From March 18 to March 25, 1927, the paper published a series of interviews with Rushdī in which the former Prime Minister discussed the establishment of the Protectorate and Egyptian reaction to it. This is one of the few sources where Rushdī's thoughts on the matter may be ascertained. At this time the paper published the letters exchanged by the Khedive 'Abbās with the Sultan in Constantinople, and with Kitchener during 1914. On January 9, 1935, al-Ahrām covered the opening of the first Wafd conference and the speech given by Muṣṭafā al-Naḥḥās. The following day the full text of Makram 'Ubayd's speech on the formation of the wafd according to Zaghlūl's interpretation is given. This is the most complete extant account of the creation of the delegation and largely agrees with the published memoirs of Luṭfī, Fahmī, and Ṭūsūn. Al-Ahrām in the same issue contains an illuminating article on the participation of Egyptian women in the nationalist movement



of 1919.

(c) Al-Kawkab, a Cairo weekly, was published under the auspices of the Arab Bureau. An English account of the formation of this paper may be found in the monthly reports of the Arab Bureau, FO371/2670. That this paper enjoyed British support was well known by the Egyptians.

(d) Al-Manār, a Cairo monthly edited by Rashīd Ridā, was a literary journal which contained a series of articles on the Arab revolt. This series was primarily aimed at convincing Egyptians that the revolt was acceptable, although it was directed against another Muslim country.

(e) Al-Minbar, a Cairo daily, was edited by George Tannūs and adopted a moderate line with regard to the Nationalists.

(f) Al-Muqattam, a Cairo daily edited by Ya'cūb Ṣarrūf and Dr. Fāris Nimr, adopted a moderate line and often supported British policy in Egypt. Therefore, it received British support and was frequently quoted by British officials. During 1919 the circulation of the paper dropped drastically because the Egyptians refused to buy a paper which they considered to be supporting British occupation. Al-Muqattam contains adequate coverage of foreign news and besides al-Ahālī was probably the best written of the Egyptian papers, although it is less informative than some of those papers which were clearly nationalist in tone and content.

(g) Al-Nizām, a Cairo daily edited by 'Alī Sa'id 'Alī, was clearly nationalist. It first appeared, as many such papers did, in 1919 and was immediately severely censored by the British. When the paper did appear

it was always virulent in tone against the British and avidly for Egyptian independence.

(h) Wādi' l-Nīl, a daily published in Alexandria, was nationalist and gave a good picture of the extent to which Egyptians hoped to carry their demands for independence. Poetry was frequently used to appeal to the nationalist sentiments of the Egyptians.

## CHAPTER II

### SIR REGINALD WINGATE'S APPOINTMENT

This study is an examination of the role which Sir Francis Reginald Wingate played in Egypt from 1916 to 1919. Wingate came to Egypt in 1916 as High Commissioner after spending the greater part of his career in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. He was attached to the Egyptian army as early as 1883, served on the Relief Expedition of 1884-5 to the Sudan, participated in the reconquest of the Sudan from 1896 to 1899, and held the office of Governor-General of the Sudan from December 1899 until 1916. During these years in the Sudan, Wingate observed the evolution of British administration in Egypt and continually offered suggestions concerning it<sup>1</sup>. Through frequent trips to Cairo and personal acquaintance with numerous British officials there, Wingate became aware of Egyptian problems. He was kept informed of the activities of the British officials in Egypt through his correspondence with Ronald Graham<sup>2</sup>, the Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, and Gilbert

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- 1 For more on Wingate's early career in the Sudan see: Ronald Wingate, Wingate of the Sudan (London, 1955); Wingate's earlier career is the subject of a dissertation in preparation for the Ph.D. degree by Gabriel Warburg, Administration in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1894-1916, University of London.
  2. Ronald Graham was Adviser to the Ministry of Interior, 1910-1916, was in the Foreign Office, 1916-1919, and was Ambassador to Italy prior to W.W.II.

Clayton<sup>3</sup>, the Sudan Agent in Cairo after 1914<sup>4</sup>. Most of their letters dealt with the activities of the Residency staff or with British civil servants, not with Egyptian administrative or financial problems. This factor may have contributed to Wingate's inclination to place more emphasis upon changing personnel in Egypt than upon developing new plans for the administration of the country. Wingate's interpretations of Egyptian affairs were also largely coloured by his Sudanese experiences. In Khartoum, Wingate acted more or less independently, although he looked directly to Cairo for approval. Within the Sudan, he worked with a small staff of closely knit officials with whom he consulted before making any definite decisions. This time-consuming process worked fairly well where problems were not pressing, as contrasted with the situation in Egypt.

Before discussing Wingate's Egyptian administration and the events which preceded his dismissal, it is necessary to describe briefly the state of affairs in 1916. When the War erupted in 1914, Great Britain had controlled Egypt for thirty-two years. During this time Great Britain had developed a complete, if somewhat complex, administration which had been superimposed on the Egyptian governmental organisation. After the suppression of the 'Urābī revolt in 1882, the British government appointed Evelyn Baring, later

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3     Gilbert Clayton was in the Sudan civil service, was Chief Secretary, Government of Palestine, 1922-1925, and was High Commissioner in Iraq when he died in 1929.

4     This correspondence is in the Sudan Archive, Durham; it is filed under Wingate's personal correspondence, 1910-1916.

Lord Cromer, as Consul-General. In effect, he ruled Egypt from 1882 to 1907 with the Egyptian Khedive and his ministers acting as subordinates. The Chancery, staffed by British civil servants, served as a communications link between the governmental departments and the Egyptian ministers<sup>5</sup>. By 1914 there were five British advisers: one to the Education, Finance, Interior, Justice, and Public Works Ministries respectively. To a great extent, the importance of the adviser depended upon personal considerations, but, in general, the Adviser to the Ministry of Finance was in a position to exert more influence, because the realisation of the projects recommended by other advisers depended upon Treasury approval. This approval was subject, until 1904, to the control of the Caisse de la Dette which had to be dealt with diplomatically in order to avoid international controversies.

For administrative purposes the country was divided into 14 provinces headed by mudīrs. The provinces were further subdivided into markazes (marākiz), consisting of groupings of villages headed by an 'umda'<sup>6</sup>. The judicial arm of the government retained the local Muslim qāḍī, but simultaneously maintained the Mixed and Native Courts which allowed the foreign

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5 Memorandum to the Residency written by Milne Cheetham, Head of the Chancery. It is undated, but was probably written in December 1916. SA151/11.

6 For more on the governmental divisions of Egypt see: J.I. Craig, 'The census of Egypt', L'Egypte Contemporaine (1917), pp.221-22; Robert L. Tignor, Modernization and British colonial rule in Egypt (1882-1914) (Princeton, 1966), where the position of the 'umda' is discussed, pp.208-13; Somers Clarke, 'The unrest in Egypt; Part II. Tales of the Omdeh', MP165.

communities and religious minorities in Egypt judicial privileges they would not have had under strict application of the Sharf'a<sup>7</sup>. The Organic Law of 1913 created the Legislative Assembly which was composed of 91 members: 8 ministers, 66 members elected by second degree election, and 17 members nominated by the government.<sup>8</sup> It had the power to delay legislation by prolonging debate, but could not reject decisions passed by the Council of Ministers in conjunction with the British advisers. The Assembly had the right to recommend measures, but these were decided upon by the ministers. Thus the Legislative Assembly was essentially an advisory body and could not, although it was indirectly responsible to the electorate, be considered a legislative body.

The task of the political system as described above was to act upon the demands which originated from the British government. Prior to World War I, Egypt was nominally subject to the Ottoman Sultan, to whom it paid tribute, although his government had no power within Egypt, as Great Britain was the governing authority. The Consul-General received instructions from the British Foreign Secretary, who was ultimately responsible to Parliament. The demands of the British government were strictly limited in scope. Its aims were to preserve law and order within Egypt, to prevent other foreign powers from gaining ascendancy, and to maintain the safety

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7 J.N.D. Anderson, 'Law Reform in Egypt: 1850-1950', Political and social change in modern Egypt, ed. P.M. Holt (London, 1968), pp.212-18.

8 Malcolm McIlwraith, 'Egyptian nationalism', Edinburgh Review (July, 1919), pp.60-77. Anderson, p.218.

of the Suez Canal, which was the principal route to India and the British possessions in the Far East<sup>9</sup>.

In this system, the Consul-General was the authority dominating the scene: as long as he maintained order the British government was content to allow him a free hand in ruling Egypt. Both Cromer and Kitchener plainly exercised all the prerogatives of their office. Egyptians and the British administrators looked to them for approval or criticism. On the other hand, under Sir Eldon Gorst the governmental departments assumed a greater degree of control over administrative policies. Gorst adopted this method of government, because he believed that the Egyptian national movement was a genuine one, and because he wished to delegate more authority to the Egyptians. When these steps appeared to diminish the power of the Consul-General and the British officials, Gorst's regime was criticised<sup>10</sup>.

9 For a fuller analysis of the importance of Suez in British foreign policy see: Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher, with Alice Denny, Africa and the Victorians, (London, 1961).

10 For example, in a private letter marked 'BURN THIS', Wingate wrote to Slatin Pasha (Rowdy) on March 23, 1910, that Gorst never asked for advice. 'It is a 1000 pities - for he must know that I, for one, am one of those who have had much experience in this country and its people and I am only too anxious to help him all in my power - more especially when I do feel the honour of our country is at stake. I do not hesitate to tell you in strict confidence that I view the whole situation with great dissatisfaction.

'The Egyptian Ministers are, most of them Nationalist at heart and waverers are being intimidated; they grope about for a sign of firmness and decision from the Home Government and so far they have found none - The general impression is that our Government is so concerned in Home Politics that they have no thoughts for anything else.' SA431/11. This subject is being

After Kitchener became Consul-General in 1911, he promptly re-asserted personal control, an action which was widely approved by British officials in London and Cairo. Through his reputation as a military leader, Kitchener secured a measure of popularity, or at least recognition, among the Egyptians. Enjoying the support of the government in London and the native population, Kitchener was able to effect his development plans for Egypt. His work was terminated by his appointment as Secretary for War in 1914, but he planned to resume his position in Egypt after the War ended.

The beginning of the War brought increased numbers of British army personnel into Egypt, placing demands for materials and men upon the administration. These requests had to be satisfied quickly and efficiently because of Egypt's strategic geographic position. Britain had to maintain firm control over Egypt - its land, people, and resources. This necessity was intensified after the Ottoman Empire declared war on the Allies, which raised the question of the legal status of Great Britain in Egypt. Undoubtedly, the position of Great Britain derived from her superior military power and visible presence in the country, but until the War, Great Britain had steadfastly maintained that she planned to remain in Egypt only until the Egyptians

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studied in a Ph.D. dissertation in preparation by Peter Mellini, British Imperial Policy and Egyptian nationalism (1907-1914), Stanford University. Also see: Tignor.



were able to rule themselves<sup>11</sup>. Publicly, Great Britain adhered to the ideal expressed by Palmerston when he remarked that he did not want Egypt,

or wish it for ourselves any more than any rational man with an estate in the north of England and a residence in the south, would have wished to possess the inns on the north road. All he could want would have been that the inns should be well kept, always accessible, and furnishing him when he came with mutton chops and post-horses. 12

There were, however, officials who were concerned over the tenuous legal position of Great Britain in Egypt. As early as May 23, 1914, Kitchener had raised the issue of British status in Egypt to Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In his letter to Grey, Kitchener enclosed a draft Proclamation consisting of 21 clauses, which aimed to isolate Egypt from contact with the enemies of Great Britain in time of war. Among other things, the Proclamation forbade commercial agreements with enemy powers; although, the Proclamation was subject to modification in respect to the Suez Canal<sup>13</sup>. After the War broke out, the British immediately began to consolidate their position in Egypt. On October 18, 1914, Ismā'īl Rushdī Pasha<sup>14</sup>, Prime Minister of Egypt, delayed the opening of the Legislative

11 Most writers did not envisage Great Britain would depart soon from Egypt. They felt it would be many years before the Egyptians could rule themselves. Sidney Low, Egypt in transition (London, 1914); Alfred Milner, England in Egypt (11th ed., London, 1904).

12 Palmerston to Lord Cowley, November 25, 1859; Evelyn Ashley, The life and correspondence of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston, Vol. II (London, 1879), p.338.

13 Kitchener to Grey, May 23, 1914, CAB11/77. Original destroyed November 23, 1923.

14 Ḥusayn Rushdī Pasha was Minister of Justice under Kitchener and Prime Minister from 1914 until 1919.

Assembly for two months<sup>15</sup>.

Discussion in Great Britain and Egypt continued over whether the best course was annexation or the declaration of a Protectorate. On November 1, 1914, Grey telegraphed Milne Cheetham<sup>16</sup>, acting Consul-General,

You will of course postpone declaration of protectorate until rupture with Turkey is complete, for this would alter status of Egypt, but there is no reason for postponing proclamation of martial law. 17

Following this telegram, General John Maxwell, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Egypt, declared martial law. On November 3, 1914, the proclamation was published in al-Muqattam<sup>18</sup>.

The declaration of martial law removed the necessity for further postponement of the opening of the Legislative Assembly. It was not, however, officially prorogued, a fact to which the Nationalists were later to refer when they called for the reinstitution of the Assembly. It is beyond the scope of this study to explain the reasons propounded in favour of annexation

15 Cheetham recommended delaying the first session of the Legislative Assembly in a telegram to the Foreign Office on September 29, 1914. Grey agreed on October 1, 1914, FO407/183.

16 Milne Cheetham was Councillor to the Agency under Kitchener, and Head of Chancery and Acting High Commissioner in the High Commissioner's absence after 1914. After 1919, he was assigned a position in the Foreign Office and later served in the Embassy in Paris.

17 Grey to Cheetham, November 1, 1914, FO407/183.

18 al-Muqattam, November 3, 1914. The Arabic text of the publication may be found in FO 891/14.

or for the Protectorate. It suffices to note that Kitchener favoured annexation as did other British officials, but owing to the strenuous objections from the men in Cairo, namely Ronald Graham, Edward Cecil<sup>19</sup> (the Adviser to the Ministry of Finance), and Milne Cheetham, the Foreign Office decided to declare a Protectorate in Egypt<sup>20</sup>. The Protectorate was declared on December 18, 1914.

His Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gives notice that, in view of the state of war arising out of the action of Turkey, Egypt is placed under the protection of His Majesty, and will henceforth constitute a British protectorate.

The suzerainty of Turkey over Egypt is terminated, and His Majesty's Government will adopt all measures necessary for the defence of Egypt, and protect its inhabitants and interests. 21

The text of the Protectorate was drawn up by Cheetham, William Brunyate<sup>22</sup> (Khedivial Counsellor), Graham, and Ronald Storrs<sup>23</sup>, the Oriental Secretary<sup>24</sup>. The Arabic word used for 'Protectorate' was Himāya.

19 Edward Cecil served in the Sudan and became Financial Adviser under Kitchener. He was the brother of Robert Cecil in the Foreign Office, and a first cousin to A.J. Balfour.

20 On November 13, 1914, the Foreign Office sent a telegram advising that Egypt be annexed. Cheetham asked them to reconsider. Ronald Graham told this story in a letter to Lord Hardinge, then Viceroy of India, on January 7, 1915, HP, Vol. 71(1915); Grey Papers, FO800/48.

21 FO407/183. The text was published in Le Journal Officiel on December 18, 1914.

22 William Brunyate began his Egyptian government service in 1898, was Judicial Adviser from 1916-1919, and acting Financial Adviser from 1917-1919.

23 Ronald Storrs became Oriental Secretary in 1907<sup>9</sup>. He was Military Governor of Jerusalem from 1917-1920.

24 Ronald Storrs, Orientalisms, (London, 1937), p.142.

Later this choice caused much debate, owing to the unfortunate historical connotations of the word. In a conversation between Storrs and Rennell Rodd, a member of the Milner Mission, Storrs related that when the text declaring the Protectorate was being written he had consulted Rushdī Pasha concerning the Arabic terminology. Storrs contended that Rushdī himself had used the word Himāya<sup>25</sup>. Whatever the word may have signified to the populace, the proclamation of the Protectorate was received quietly in 1914. Under the terms of the Protectorate, the Consul-General became the High Commissioner. According to international law Egypt became a territory where the interference of another foreign power was precluded, and where the protecting state assumed full sovereignty<sup>26</sup>.

Rushdī Pasha later attempted to justify his acceptance of the Protectorate on the grounds that the Egyptians had no alternative. After hearing about the intention of Britain to declare a Protectorate, Rushdī discussed the matter with Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, Sa'd Zaghlūl, and 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī. Following a lengthy conversation they decided that Egypt had to accept the terms offered by Britain<sup>27</sup>. Luṭfī al-Sayyid in his memoirs corroborates Rushdī's interpretation and adds that Rushdī talked to Wingate

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25 Memorandum on a conversation between Rodd and Storrs for the Milner Mission, n.d. circa January 1920, MP165.

26 For more on the legal status of a protecting power and the protected state see: Arthur Berriedale Keith, The Governments of the British Empire (London, 1936).

27 al-Ahrām, March 18, 1927. This interview with Rushdī deals with Ḥusayn's acceptance of the throne. It contains copies of the letters written by Ḥusayn and Rushdī concerning the Protectorate and deposition of Khedive 'Abbās.

prior to the declaration of the Protectorate. At this time, Wingate told Rushdī that Egypt had to support Britain during the War, and that after the War the question of Egyptian independence would be considered. After Turkey declared War on the Allies, Rushdī talked with Storrs who confirmed Wingate's analysis<sup>28</sup>. Feeling that there was no other choice, Rushdī accepted the British Protectorate over Egypt, but expected that the terms for independence would be discussed immediately following the Armistice.

On the same day as the proclamation of the Protectorate, the Foreign Office announced the appointment of Sir Henry McMahon<sup>29</sup> as High Commissioner, the deposition of 'Abbās Ḥilmī, who was in Turkey, and the accession of Prince Ḥusayn Kāmil<sup>30</sup> with the new title of Sultan. Ḥusayn was reputedly pro-British, and his accession to the Sultanate was favoured among British officials. On December 21, two days after the French had recognised the Protectorate, Ḥusayn was installed as the Sultan of Egypt.

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28 Aḥmad Lutfī al-Sayyid, Ḥayātī I (Cairo, n.d.), pp.163-67.

29 Henry McMahon was Foreign Secretary to the Government of India from 1911-1914.

30 McMahon's appointment surprised some officials who felt it was a poor choice. On January 6, 1915, Hardinge wrote to A. Nicolson, permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, that he was amazed. On January 27, he wrote Graham that the appointment had been made over his head. Hardinge added, 'as a matter of fact, what I should like to have seen would have been your appointment.' HP, Vol.93(1915). The idea of Graham's appointment had been raised when Kitchener became Consul-General. Tyrrell, in the Foreign Office, told Hardinge on June 8, 1911, 'No better choice could be made if he were a little older and an interval had occurred between his present post and the top one but everybody, with any knowledge of Egypt, agrees that it would be a mistake to turn him on the spot from being a servant of the Khedive into his master.' HP, Vol. 92 (1911).

McMahon arrived in Egypt on January 9, 1915. His views of the duties of the High Commissioner contrasted noticeably with those of his predecessor; therefore a greater proportion of governmental responsibility was delegated to his advisers. McMahon considered that his main tasks were to keep peace among army officials in Egypt and to facilitate the work of the civilian and military administration.

In order to understand the problems with which Wingate had to deal when he became High Commissioner, it is helpful to view the position of the army within Egypt during the War. From the onset of the War, Great Britain feared that the Central Powers would attack the Suez Canal. For this reason, Great Britain had strongly fortified the area. Under General Maxwell<sup>31</sup>, the army repelled a half-hearted Turkish attack on the Canal in February 1915. During 1915, Alexandria was used as a base for the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, which fought in the Dardanelles, under Sir Ian Hamilton. After the inception of the Dardanelles Campaigns, Egypt became the sick station for soldiers returning from that front<sup>32</sup>.

On December 24, 1915, Grey telegraphed to McMahon that Maxwell, who was in command of both the Canal and the Western Egyptian fronts, and

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31 General John Maxwell served in 1882 as ADC for General Wolseley, was Commander of British troops in Egypt from 1908-1912, served in Ireland from 1916 to 1918, and accompanied the Milner Mission to Egypt in 1919.

32 Sir David Semple, Director-General of Public Health Department, report to High Commissioner, July 3, 1918. R.W. Ford, Surgeon-General, to Semple, March 26, 1918, 'Egypt became one huge Military Hospital from Alexandria right up to Luxor, to say nothing of the Provinces!' FO141/790.

was responsible for maintaining martial law within Egypt, had too much administrative work. Grey reported that the War Office wished Maxwell to continue as commander over martial law but wanted him relieved of his military command over Suez. Grey asked if Maxwell could be attached to the High Commissioner as the Military Administrator of Martial Law<sup>33</sup>.

McMahon replied that this arrangement would further complicate the situation. Nevertheless, on January 7, 1916, General Murray<sup>34</sup> took command of Suez operations. Maxwell was retained as administrator of martial law and as commander over the Western front operations against the Sanūsī<sup>35</sup>.

With so many generals stationed within a limited geographic area, competition was bound to arise. McMahon wrote to Hardinge that there were 100 generals in Egypt<sup>36</sup>; he later reported that the number had increased to 150<sup>37</sup>. Remaining optimistic, McMahon thought that the difficulties would sort themselves out in time, but Graham felt that the relations between Murray and Maxwell, not to mention the other generals, would remain strained<sup>38</sup>. Wingate, who had been informed of the rivalry between Maxwell

33 Grey to McMahon, December 24, 1915, Grey Papers, FO800/48.

34 Archibald Murray was Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, 1916-1917.

35 McMahon to Grey, January 11, 1916, Grey Papers, FO800/48.

36 McMahon to Hardinge, January 6, 1916, HP, Vol. 72 (1916).

37 McMahon to Hardinge, January 31, 1916, HP, Vol. 72 (1916). On February 29, 1916, Sir Markham, in Commons, asked if there were 117 generals in Egypt. The reply did not contain the exact number. Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), LXXX(1916), 872.

38 Graham to Hardinge, March 1, 1916, HP, Vol. 72 (1916).

and Murray by Clayton, doubted that matters could remain permanently unsettled.

The general arrangement for the division of the command in Egypt shows that the breaking up was no easy matter, and it certainly seems an odd arrangement, but then our military system, from beginning to end, is, I think, open to that qualification, and I suppose we shall arrange matters somehow or other and eventually come out on top in spite of the defects of our qualities. 39

The rivalry between the two generals did not continue long, for by the end of March Maxwell had left for England and Murray was left in full command.

In spite of the competition among the officers<sup>40</sup>, the army kept a firm grip on the internal Egyptian situation which remained calm. Great Britain continued to be confident that the Egyptians had accepted the Protectorate and were content with the new status<sup>41</sup>.

After Maxwell's departure, McMahon, who had relied heavily on him for advice, became more and more dependent for support upon Edward Cecil. McMahon's position within Egypt was further complicated by rumours of

39 Wingate to Clayton, February 11, 1916, SA470.

40 These rivalries were so well known that poems were created concerning them. One such example may be found in the Bonar Law Papers, 52/3/7.

41 For example, Kitchener told the House of Lords on January 6, 1915, that 'the change has been most warmly welcomed by the native populace.' Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Lords), XVIII (1915), 240.



friction between himself and Sultan Husayn<sup>42</sup>. Clayton and Graham both informed Wingate of these difficulties and urged him to come to Cairo in order to remedy the situation. Wingate refused these requests, saying that he was too busy with Sudanese problems to journey to Egypt. Discontent among the civil servants continued to grow. Lord Hardinge, on his return trip to England, where he was to become permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, stopped in Cairo<sup>43</sup> and reported to Whitehall concerning the dissatisfaction over McMahon's work as High Commissioner.

Matters drifted until Kitchener's death in June 1916. After this, the Foreign Office began to consider seriously the advisability of appointing another High Commissioner. With this fact in mind, Hardinge wrote personally to Graham in July 1916 to say that both Wingate and Graham were being considered for the position.

- 42 In his diary, Mervyn Herbert mentioned in November 1915 that McMahon was becoming a cypher. PPC. Graham wrote to Hardinge concerning McMahon's dependence upon Cecil, September 9, 1916, HP, Vol. IV (25), 1916. Kenny to Wingate, September 12, 1916, wrote about the friction between McMahon and the Sultan. 'The H.C. does not now lift his little finger without Cecil's advice and the latter always belittles the Sultan and preaches a policy of "Though there is not annexation, carry on as if there was".' SA160/1.
- 43 During Hardinge's visit in Egypt he talked with Graham, McMahon, and other British officials. From all evidence, McMahon does not seem to have been aware of the rumours concerning his inadequacies.

Now that Kitchener has gone the question has been raised of appointing a permanent successor. Please keep this absolutely to yourself. I gather that the choice lies between you and the Sirdar. Grey is most favourably disposed towards you but is doubtful whether it would not be better for you to have a really good Legation in Europe first. 44

In a letter dated July 20, 1916, Graham replied:

I must say I think the Sirdar would do very well in many ways - he is excellent with natives and would be sure to get on capitally with the Sultan and the Ministers. In the Soudan he had a wonderful hold on the Sheikhs etc ... but is disliked by the British officials whom he fusses and worries to death. I am inclined to think he would be the best selection - he will give you lively times at the F.O. with his 10 page telegrams. Socially the W's would do their duty nobly and make the Residency functions if possible more boring than they are now. 45

That Wingate found it easier to establish a rapport with Egyptians than with his British subordinates was to be an important factor in causing difficulties when he became High Commissioner. Because of his predilection for long dispatches, the Foreign Office was inclined to scan his correspondence or to presume that the case had been overstated. In this letter, Graham spoke of Cecil's continued domination of the administration. He felt that McMahon expected to remain High Commissioner indefinitely and was using Cecil as his main support. With regard to the clique about Cecil, Graham remarked,

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44 Hardinge to Graham, this letter is undated, but was obviously written soon after Kitchener's death. From the reply Graham wrote it may be assumed that this particular letter was written in the middle of July 1916. HP, Vol. I (22), 1916.

45 Graham to Hardinge, July 20, 1916, HP, Vol. II (23), 1916.

'I have never concealed my opinion as to how badly they want shaking and routing out.',<sup>46</sup>

After receiving Graham's reply, Hardinge wrote a second letter. In this message, he told Graham that Grey had discussed the new appointment with him on several occasions.

The two candidates for the post are the Sirdar and yourself. It was questionable whether the Sirdar could be spared from the Soudan where he is considered to have done remarkably well ... I may as well say at once that the Sirdar is first favourite, although Grey has the highest opinion of your services and ability, and I know he intends to propose the Sirdar to the Prime Minister.<sup>47</sup>

Since Graham would not, therefore, be receiving the appointment as High Commissioner, Hardinge suggested he come to the Foreign Office as an assistant Under-Secretary, a position which Hardinge felt held promise for future advancement<sup>48</sup>. Graham promptly replied to express his gratitude for the offer, but doubted that his past experience gave him the necessary qualifications for a position in the Foreign Office. In confidence, he told Hardinge the lines along which he had planned his career.

46 Ibid.

47 Hardinge to Graham, n.d. This letter, like the first, is not dated, but its contents reveal it was written after Graham's reply of July 20. Hardinge probably wrote it during the third week of July. Graham replied to it on July 25. HP, Vol. I (22), 1916.

48 Ibid. Hardinge confided to Graham that after the War he would be going to the Paris post. He suggested that Graham would then be the ideal candidate for permanent Under-Secretary.

The strength of my position here lies not so much in my administration as in the personal equation, which counts for so much in the East, and the fact that my staff especially the native portions of it, like and trust me . . . I confess that the career that I had vaguely mapped out for myself was to leave here as soon as I could be spared, to have a good rest, to go to a Diplomatic post in a decent climate and possibly, some day or other, to return here. 49

This indicated that Graham considered himself qualified to be High Commissioner. This fact should be borne in mind, in light of later developments. Graham repeated that Wingate would do a fine job, as he understood the country. After a further written exchange, Graham accepted Hardinge's offer of a position in the Foreign Office. While Graham kept Wingate informed of the intrigues between Cecil and the other civil servants, he did not tell him of his personal aspirations or of his correspondence with Hardinge.

Although he was ignorant of Graham's expectations, Wingate had formed an opinion concerning the friction among the High Commissioner, the Commander-in-Chief, and the British civil servants. He had also thought out the problems presented by the lack of communication between the Foreign Office and the various governmental officials in Egypt. In a long letter of September 13, 1916, Wingate analysed these problems, discussing the rivalry of Maxwell and Murray, and McMahon's ambiguous position. He pointed out that it was absolutely necessary to have clear-cut lines of command, and then considered the friction existing among the governing

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49     Graham to Hardinge, July 25, 1916. HP, Vol. II (23), 1916.

officials.

What actual operations are in progress, duality of control generally spells muddle if not defeat - I take it that Maxwell's unpopularity, in certain quarters, was due to the fact that he worked on the lines that martial law made him supreme in Egypt - evidently the F.O. who look on Egypt as their pigeon, were too strong for the W.O.

In the present case, I presume that the Gov't. has acquiesced in the F.O. point of view that the Resident (who is after all, a soldier) should be considered supreme and that the ultimate decisions both civil and military - should rest in his hands - If this is so, then I am puzzled at Murray's attitude and can only conceive that the very evident friction ... is the outcome of the generally undefined situation whereby our Gov't. seeks to "carry on somehow", in their anxiety not to upset the various authorities - whereas if they only clearly defined their instructions, much trouble would be avoided.

However, the removal of Maxwell (who of course knew infinitely more about Egypt than McMahon) and his substitution by an inexperienced C-in-C did not work the miracle which the H.C. expected - nor will it ever be workable so long as the C-in-C knows his business and appreciates the lessons of history - all of which go to show that when actual operations are in progress there can be only one head -

Hence the constantly increasing friction between the C-in-C and the H.C. because of the nebulous situation - each thinks he has a right to "boss" the other and the government will not apparently put its foot down. 50

In concluding, Wingate reiterated his dependence upon Clayton as an intermediary between the High Commissioner and the Commander-in-Chief. He bemoaned the fact that too many of the officials in Egypt did not have their minds fixed upon the primary goal at hand, which was to win the War.

... but unfortunately this vitally important issue is often obscured by personal jealousies and personal ambition - a condition of affairs which is of very rapid growth in the intrigue soaked soil of Egypt. 51

Within Egypt, British personnel were rapidly moving into other positions or leaving Egypt entirely. After Graham accepted the post in the Foreign Office, a dispute ensued over the new appointment of the Adviser to the Interior. Graham supported Clayton for the position, while Cecil and McMahon backed James Haines, former Chief Collector of Taxes. Hardinge enquired whether Cheetham would be a suitable candidate, and Graham answered:

I am afraid Cheetham would not do at all, even as a stop-gap - he does not know a word of Arabic, very little of the country and practically nothing of the people or officials and though accurate and painstaking is terribly slow - he would never get through the work. 52

It was imperative that the Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, who was the major British contact with the Egyptians, should have a thorough knowledge of the country and its people. For this reason, Graham considered both Haines and Cheetham inappropriate choices. Graham rejected Haines, for he was Cecil's nominee, 'which damned him with the natives'. 53

After Hardinge heard Graham's opinions, he asked for McMahon's views, while pointing out that matters could become serious if the Adviser was not

51 Ibid.

52 Graham to Hardinge, September 9, 1916. Graham's estimate of Cheetham's abilities will be noted when Cheetham takes control of the administration in Wingate's absence. HP, Vol. IV(25), 1916.

53 Ibid.

'eminently suited'<sup>54</sup> for the post. McMahon responded that Haines was popular with the natives, and that Clayton's appointment was impossible because he could not be spared from his work in the Arab Bureau. McMahon indicated that Clayton was disliked in some native quarters, owing to his connection with the military<sup>55</sup>. After a period of indecision, Haines was appointed<sup>56</sup>.

When Graham's impending departure was announced, the Egyptian ministers planned a series of farewell parties. These and other tokens of native regret caused Graham to have second thoughts about leaving Egypt<sup>57</sup>, but on September 27, he and his wife left amid a large-scale Egyptian send-off<sup>58</sup>. Following this, Aubrey Herbert wrote to Wingate that Graham would be missed, and that he wished Wingate would be appointed High Commissioner<sup>59</sup>.

By this time, Wingate's appointment was nearing realisation. Rumours of it were widespread among British officials long before it was publicly

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54 Hardinge to McMahon, September 21, 1916, HP, Vol. IV(25), 1916.

55 McMahon to Hardinge, September 25, 1916, HP, Vol. IV(25), 1916.

56 Clayton told Wingate he was sorry he had not received the appointment. Graham reported to Hardinge, September 27, 1916, that he had pushed hard for Clayton, but had been defeated by the joint opposition of McMahon and Cecil. HP, Vol. IV(25), 1916.

57 Graham to Hardinge, September 9, 1916, HP, Vol. IV(25), 1916.

58 The Egyptian Gazette, September 28, 1916.

59 Aubrey Herbert to Wingate, October 16, 1916, SA160/4. Aubrey Herbert was from the Herbert of Wilton family and was attached to the G.O.C.'s staff during the war.

announced. Mervyn Herbert in his diary mentioned in September, while in London, that he had heard of Wingate's appointment. When he returned to Cairo, he told Cheetham the news<sup>60</sup>. On October 11, 1916, Grey asked Wingate if he would consider becoming the High Commissioner. In this letter, Grey told him that McMahon's appointment had been temporary, and that with Kitchener's death the Foreign Office wished to make a permanent nomination. Grey asked Wingate to name a successor as Governor-General of the Sudan, and to take a brief rest in London before assuming the responsibilities in Egypt<sup>61</sup>.

Wingate answered Grey immediately. He thanked the Secretary for the honour, accepted the position, and recommended Lee Stack<sup>62</sup> as acting Governor-General<sup>63</sup>. On October 30, Grey telegraphed that Wingate's appointment was final, and that the Foreign Office wished him to begin work before the end of the year<sup>64</sup>. News of Wingate's appointment spread quickly. On November 5, Graham congratulated him and told him that he would back his requests to the Foreign Office.

The Times announced the appointment on November 6. After that, the official congratulations began to pour into Wingate's mail. These letters contained best wishes and remarks that matters would improve with a new man in

60 Mervyn Herbert diary, PPC.

61 Grey to Wingate, October 11, 1916, SA160/4.

62 Lee Stack served in the Sudar from 1900 and became Governor-General in 1919. He was murdered in Cairo in 1924.

63 Wingate to Grey, October 12, 1916, MP162.

64 Grey to Wingate, October 30, 1916, repeated October 31, MP162.



Cairo. Clayton wrote that the appointment had been a blow to McMahon, but that it would 'do away with a 1000 difficulties and inaugurate a very different state of affairs'<sup>65</sup>. That Wingate's appointment was a universally popular one is evidenced by this multitude of congratulations, and the favourable press-reports<sup>66</sup>.

There are, however, indications that McMahon resented being so summarily dismissed. In a letter to Hardinge he remarked that the natives 'cannot but suspect that I have been intentionally misleading them and this is hardly fair to me'<sup>67</sup>. He had earlier expressed personal doubts as to Wingate's suitability for the position of High Commissioner<sup>68</sup>. McMahon seems to have been the only individual who regretted the change, for The Times correspondent noted on November 11 that Wingate's appointment was popular with 'all elements of the population, because he was well known and had great personal prestige'<sup>69</sup>.

On November 13, Clayton wrote that he was looking forward to Wingate's arrival. He hoped the Foreign Office would make Wingate Commander-in-Chief as well as High Commissioner, since he possessed the necessary

65 Clayton to Wingate, November 6, 1916, SA160/5/1.

66 Letters were received from Slatin Pasha, who worked with the Red Cross and was able to correspond through that agency, the Earl of Cromer, and many British officials. SA236.

67 McMahon to Hardinge, November 10, 1916, HP, Vol. VI (27), 1916. Also see Herbert diary, PPC.

68 McMahon to Hardinge, October 13, 1916, HP, Vol. V (26), 1916; Lloyd George Papers, E3/12/1.

69 The Times, November 11, 1916.

qualifications for both positions<sup>70</sup>. Wingate asked the Foreign Office if a dual appointment was possible, but the officials in London rejected the idea. This rejection restricted Wingate's exercise of full control over the Egyptian government, leaving him to deal with the army officers in much the same way as McMahon.

News of Wingate's appointment caused speculation in Cairo as to whether he would stress the civilian or military aspect of the government. It must be remembered that Wingate was a military officer on the active list, and so remained, even after he had assumed the position of High Commissioner. During this time, he was also Commander of Operations in the Hijāz. Consequently, there was every possibility that Wingate would emphasize the military side. The debate assumed the form of discussion over what type of dress Wingate would wear when arriving in Cairo, since this was considered a sign of the form of government he would adopt. Wingate recommended that he should arrive in military uniform. The question was debated at the Foreign Office, where it was decided that Wingate wear the uniform of a British General when entering Cairo<sup>71</sup>. In a private letter to Graham, Wingate had already expressed his intention of wearing the British khaki uniform unless there was an objection<sup>72</sup>.

No doubt Wingate gave some thought to what form his administration

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70 Clayton to Wingate, November 13, 1916, SA160/5/1.

71 FO371/2667. The decision is undated, but appears to have been made between November 2 and November 28.

72 Wingate to Graham, November 12, 1916. Wingate telegraphed the same message to the Foreign Office, FO371/1667.

would take in Egypt. Initially, he was anxious that the entire Egyptian effort should be directed towards winning the War. Desirous that all personal intrigue in the Egyptian administration should halt at once, Wingate wrote concerning the matter to Clayton and Cheetham.

After all our one and only preoccupation at the present time should be to try and win the war - individual interests and personal ambitions must go to the winds when it is a question of obtaining efficiency in order to achieve the main object in view - none of us can go far wrong if we adhere to this most important principle. 73

Our main efforts must be directed to adding our small gusto towards achieving a victory over our enemies - and till then, I support administrative reforms must necessarily take a second place. 74

Wingate had cause to worry over the extent of the personal rivalries for he had been receiving letters on the subject since the summer of 1916. After his appointment became official, more letters warning of the schism between Edward Cecil, the Adviser to the Ministry of Finance, and other British officials in Egypt were written to Wingate. Unfortunately, these letters dwelt more upon the personal aspects of the problem than upon the actual administrative difficulties in Egypt. When discussing the problems Aubrey Herbert wrote:

You will find (beginning at Residency) little or no discipline, most people doing what they like; and none of the keenness which was the feature of Anglo-Egyptian officials in former years. 75

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73 Wingate to Clayton, November 24, 1916, SA160/5/1.

74 Wingate to Cheetham, November 27, 1916, SA236.

75 Aubrey Herbert to Wingate, November 16, 1916, SA153/7.

You are coming to a land fuller than ever of intrigue;  
and where individuals . . . consider their own future of  
more importance than the state's. 'It is the race for  
honours and not for honour.' 76

Wingate replied that he thought it a pity that Cecil was trying to advance his own position rather than work towards winning the War<sup>77</sup>.

Thus Wingate, although aware of the currents of personal conflict in Egypt, did not wish to make any far-reaching changes in the system until the War had been won; nor are there indications that Wingate was fully informed concerning the problems confronting the Egyptian nation. He did, however, have close friends among the Egyptians, including the Sultan, with whom he had corresponded since the latter's accession. According to Major W.D. Kenny, the British aide-de-camp to the Sultan, Husayn said, 'The day the Sirdar occupies the Residency, I shall consider myself in Paradise.'<sup>78</sup> In hopes of cementing this friendship more firmly, Wingate wrote to Husayn on November 16 and expressed the desire to see the Sultan shortly to discuss with him the many problems facing Egypt<sup>79</sup>.

After agreeing to see Wingate, Husayn replied frankly to his enquiries about Egypt.

En nous donnant la main bien intimement, car je n'aurai  
pas besoin d'avoir des intermédiaires entre Vous et moi,  
j'ai confiance dans l'avenir, le bonheur et la prospérité

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76 Aubrey Herbert to Wingate, November 26, 1916, SA160/6.

77 Wingate to Clayton, November 30, 1916, SA160/5/1.

78 Kenny to Wingate, December 4, 1916, SA160/6.

79 Wingate to Sultan Husayn, November 16, 1916, SA153/7.

de l'Egypte. J'ai le sentiment que tirer les hauts fonctionnaires, par votre présence, connaîtront bien leurs devoirs respectifs, et ne se mêleront pas de questions étrangères à leurs attributions. J'espère que cette "Camorra" cessera, avec votre présence ici - qui remettra toutes choses à sa place. 80

This letter indicates the Sultan's dissatisfaction with the British administration. Wingate sent the letter to Graham, asking him what the Sultan meant by 'Camorra'.<sup>81</sup>

The Sultan, in ill-health, was advised by his doctors to take a vacation on his private yacht in Upper Egypt, where Wingate visited him on his way to Cairo. During this meeting, the governor of Aswān, and the Egyptian Minister of Finance, Yūsuf Wahba Pasha, were present. In Wingate's private notes on the interview with these men, he wrote that they were dissatisfied with those relations presently existing between themselves and the British advisers. They believed that the British did not pay enough attention to Egyptian views, and that Egyptians were not receiving an adequate share of governmental responsibility<sup>82</sup>.

Following this interview, Wingate and Wahba travelled to Luxor<sup>83</sup>.

80 Sultan Husayn to Wingate, November 23, 1916, SA153/7.

81 Wingate to Graham, December 3, 1916, SA160/6. 'Camorra' was a secret organisation in Naples. The Sultan used the term in referring to the Cecil clique.

82 Wingate's note on the interview which was held on December 21, 1916, SA227.

83 The Egyptian Gazette, December 22, 1916.

They were accompanied by Stewart Symes<sup>84</sup>, Keown-Boyd<sup>85</sup>, and Patterson<sup>86</sup>, all trusted subordinates from the Sudan who would participate in effecting a smooth administrative transition. However, by bringing them along Wingate caused some consternation among the officials in Cairo, and, to some extent, isolated himself from them. For example, Clayton feared Wingate's appointment would eliminate his work in the Arab Bureau and as liaison between the Sudan and Egypt<sup>87</sup>. Similarly, Storrs was largely deprived of his duties by Symes and Keown-Boyd, while Stack worried over the weaknesses created in Khartoum by the departure of so many experienced men<sup>88</sup>. If Wingate was aware of these considerations, his correspondence and notes do not reveal it.

McMahon left Egypt aboard the Khyber on December 23, in a departure carefully timed to miss Wingate's arrival on December 27. Aḥmad Dhū'l-Faqār, (Zulficar), Head of Ceremonies, greeted Wingate at the railway

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- 84 Stewart Symes acted as A.D.C. to the Sirdar and had been Assistant director of Intelligence in the Sudan. He was Governor of the Northern district in Palestine from 1920-1925, and later became Governor-General of the Sudan.
- 85 Alexander Keown-Boyd served in the Sudan civil service from 1907 and was Wingate's private secretary from 1917. He became Director-General for Foreign Affairs in Egypt in 1922 and served in Egypt until 1937.
- 86 B. Patterson was Wingate's stenographer.
- 87 See Clayton-Stack correspondence, SA470/6.
- 88 Stack to Clayton, December 18, 1916. 'Symes as I told you I expected him always to take as he has become so dependent on him for all drafting purposes but K-B he might have left. Patterson has been for so many years his stenographer and has typed his most private letters that he would never let him go.' SA470/6.

station amid a crowd of cheering Egyptians<sup>89</sup>. Although Wingate did not formally receive the King's appointment as High Commissioner until January 1, 1917,<sup>90</sup> he promptly took control. He sent an official report of his arrival, interview with the Sultan, and state of affairs in Egypt to the Foreign Office soon after assuming his position. After receiving the report, Hardinge showed it to A.J. Balfour, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and remarked at the end of it, 'Very satisfactory.'<sup>91</sup> Hardinge wrote to Wingate that with his long years of experience he would have little difficulty<sup>92</sup>.

In passing, it is noteworthy that Wingate went directly to Cairo without first visiting London. This omission may have increased his difficulties in later years, for in December 1916 Asquith's government fell and was replaced by a new Cabinet led by Lloyd George. Wingate was known personally to Asquith and Grey, but he had only a passing acquaintance with Lloyd George and other members of the new Coalition government. Had he gone to London before taking up his work in Cairo, he could have become acquainted with the views of the new Cabinet members, and, more important, informed them of his plans for Egypt.

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89 For a description of Wingate's arrival see: The Egyptian Gazette, December 28, 1916.

90 King's Proclamation, January 1, 1917, SA430/9/1.

91 Wingate to Foreign Office, January 24, 1917, FO371/2926.

92 Hardinge to Wingate, January 2, 1917, SA163.

After arriving in Cairo, Wingate initiated a series of interviews with Egyptian governors and other officials, all of whom greeted him favourably. Storrs remarked that Wingate was agreeable and that the 'Egyptians and even the English are almost demonstrative in their satisfaction'.<sup>93</sup> By the end of January, Storrs had decided that Wingate knew a great deal about local problems, but lacked sophistication and comprehension of the political scene in London<sup>94</sup>. In a note on the Egyptian administration sent to Graham, Storrs noted that Wingate's popularity continued and was increased by his reception of local deputations<sup>95</sup>, which Storrs felt would be reduced at a later date without loss<sup>96</sup>. Lauding Wingate, Storrs remarked that his reception technique was 'beyond praise'.<sup>97</sup> Wingate left the morning until 10.30 free for the British advisers, received outside visitors from 10.30 until noon, and finished the Residency work from noon until 1.30. Storrs pointed out that Wingate took quick decisions on his own authority when issues were clearly presented, but he added a qualifying remark:

He is however I think, for all his knowledge somewhat staggered by the depth and complexity of the eddies and cross currents of the Lower Nile. 98

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93 Storrs to Nina Cust, January 18, 1917, Storrs Papers, Vol. II/4.

94 Storrs to Nina Cust, January 31, 1917, Storrs Papers, Vol. II/4.

95 For a listing of these deputations see The Egyptian Gazette for the month of January 1917.

96 Note by an English civil servant on the situation, January 31, 1917, Storrs Papers, Vol. II/4.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.



Thus Wingate's arrival was initially greeted with an enthusiasm which continued for a short time. He made an auspicious beginning with the natives by listening to their opinions and with the British by working hard and giving a lead on definitely presented issues. Essentially, Wingate had a threefold responsibility as High Commissioner. First, he had to implement the War effort to the best of his ability; this, of course, entailed facilitating co-operation between civilian and military officials in Egypt, while maintaining the efficiency of the Egyptian government. Secondly, he had to ensure that the relations between officials in the Foreign Office and in Egypt remained friendly, and that the instructions of the Foreign Office were followed. At the same time, he had to make suggestions to and advise London on all Egyptian business. Thirdly, Wingate was largely accountable for the direction of the Arab revolt in the Ḥijāz, over which he had been appointed Military and Political Commander; this task and Wingate's execution of it are the subject of the next chapter.

### CHAPTER III

#### WINGATE AS GENERAL OFFICER IN COMMAND OF OPERATIONS IN THE HIJĀZ

While Governor-General in the Sudan, Wingate supported Sharīf Husayn's attempts to organise an Arab revolt against Ottoman suzerainty and to gain British encouragement and material aid for the revolt. Throughout the long negotiations between Sharīf Husayn and the British prior to the revolt, Wingate constantly reiterated the potential of such a movement<sup>1</sup>. He felt that an Arab revolt could contribute to the defeat of the Turkish forces and thereby lessen the amount of Turkish assistance on the more important Western fronts. Then, too, Wingate believed that the revolt could be an effective deterrent against Pan-Islamism. Through his correspondence with Sultan Husayn in Egypt, Sayyid 'Alī al-Mirghānī, a Sudanese notable and faithful exponent of British policy, and the officials in the Arab Bureau<sup>2</sup>,

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- 1 Wingate to Hardinge, January 9, 1915, SA469/8; Wingate to Grey, March 27, 1915, Grey Papers, FO800/48; Wingate to Clayton, October 27, SA135/4.
  - 2 Sultan Husayn to Wingate, July 8, July 23, and September 7, 1916, SA153/6, SA153/7; al-Mirghānī to Wingate, May 6, 1915, SA134/6; al-Mirghānī to Wingate, August 22, 1915, SA135/2. Wingate sent these to Hardinge, HP, Vol. 72(1915). The Arab Bureau was created in an interdepartmental conference held in London on January 7, 1916. It was to disseminate propaganda, gather intelligence, and to act as British agent in the Hijāz. D.G. Hogarth, a noted British Orientalist, directed the Bureau; Captain K. Cornwallis took over in his absence. They were assisted by Captains R.W. Graves, W.H. Deedes, M.S. McDonnell, and Mr. A.B. Fforde and Mr. Gerrard. At a later

Wingate was kept informed of the Ḥusayn-McMahon negotiations.

The revolt began on June 9, 1916: Wingate gained military command over it on October 3, 1916. Earlier, Wingate's influence in regard to the revolt had been limited to offering advice to McMahon in Cairo and to despatching limited numbers of material and Egyptian personnel to the Ḥijāz at the end of June<sup>3</sup>. McMahon kept political control over the revolt, even after Wingate had received military command. McMahon's control continued until General Murray, at Wingate's behest, recommended that political control should be removed from McMahon's direction<sup>4</sup>. McMahon objected vigorously against giving Wingate political control, but the Foreign Office over-ruled these objections<sup>5</sup>. Thus, on November 9, McMahon wrote that he had withdrawn his objections, and that Wingate was to assume political control. McMahon, however, asked to be kept informed of all developments<sup>6</sup>.

date, T.E. Lawrence joined. For an account of the activities of the Bureau and its personnel see: Monthly reports, FO141/738, FO371/2670, and Arab Bureau Papers, FO882/1-24.

- 3 Wingate wrote to Sultan Ḥusayn on August 5, 1916, that he had no military or political responsibility for the revolt. SA153/6. His activities are summarised in his letter to the War Office, June 25, 1917, FO141/668.
- 4 Murray to McMahon, October 5, 1916. 'To conduct political control from Cairo and Military control from Sudan appears to me to be unworkable. Sirdar is undoubtedly best man for Military control.' FO141/738.
- 5 McMahon to Wingate, July 10, 1916, October 20, 1916; Foreign Office to McMahon, October 9, 1916, FO141/738.
- 6 McMahon to Wingate, November 9, 1916, FO141/738.

Wingate's command over the operations in the Ḥijāz was formally recognised in a telegram from the Foreign Office on February 3, 1917, a little over a month after he had assumed office in Cairo.

The story of the Arab revolt and the negotiations which preceded it are both well known and widely debated. For this reason, only a brief examination of the political-military situation as it stood when Wingate arrived in Cairo as High Commissioner will be given in this study<sup>7</sup>. The Sharīf unilaterally declared himself King of the Ḥijāz and of the Arab Nation on October 29, 1916, but the British, who were surprised by the declaration, only recognised the Sharīf as King of the Ḥijāz<sup>8</sup>. By December 1916, the Arab forces led by the Sharīf's sons, 'Abd Allāh, Fayṣal, and 'Alī, had captured Mecca, Yanbu', Rabegh, and Ta'if, but Turkish forces remained in control of Medina and the Ḥijāz railway. British military authorities were faced with the problem of whether or not to deploy Arab troops in the north in order to harrass Turkish positions and to occupy its troops. In spite of

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7 Narratives of the revolt are to be found in: The Arab Bulletin, published weekly in Cairo, SA206; T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom (London, 1935); and Stairs. For an account of the negotiations prior to the revolt see: George Antonius, The Arab awakening (London, 1938). The text of the Ḥusayn-McMahon correspondence may be seen in: CAB21/154; Sulaymān Mūsā (ed.), al-thawra al-'Arabiyya al-kubrā, (Amman, 1966), and Amīn Sa'īd, al-thawra al-'Arabiyya (Cairo, n.d.).

8 McMahon wrote to Hardinge, November 10, 1916, that the Sharīf had been presumptuous to call himself King of the Ḥijāz, but that 'to call himself King of the Arab Nation, before he has even got the Hedjaz, is absurd.' HP, Vol. VI (27), 1916. Although Wingate thought the assumption of the title was premature, he felt that it might help to allay rumours that Great Britain had designs on Arabia. Wingate to Grey, November 15, 1916, Grey Papers, FO800/48.

opposition from the British agent in Jeddah, C.E. Wilson<sup>9</sup>, and other officials, Wingate maintained that British troops ought to be sent into the Hijāz.

The dispatch of British or other European troops into the Hijāz was therefore Wingate's most immediate concern after he arrived in Cairo. Early in December, Turkish forces had intersected lines of communication between Rabegh and Yanbu' and threatened to take Rabegh<sup>10</sup>. Without reinforcements, Arab troops were not expected to withstand a full scale Turkish offensive. Acting on Wingate's advice, the War Cabinet decided not to send British troops unless an emergency arose. On December 15, this decision was reversed, and Wingate was informed that he could send a British brigade from Suez. On the same day, Balfour wrote to Wingate that if the revolt collapsed, owing to a lack of soldiers, the fault would be the Sharīf's, since he refused aid which the British government had been willing to supply<sup>11</sup>. On December 21, Wingate heard from Jeddah that the Sharīf refused to permit Christian troops to land in the Hijāz, because he feared Moslem reaction to the presence of the troops near the Holy Places<sup>12</sup>. This report contradicted earlier ones in which the

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9 Cyril Edward Wilson had been attached to the Egyptian army since 1898 and had served in the Sudan since 1907. Wingate had recommended a British agent to be dispatched to Jeddah to assist the Sharīf. Wingate to McMahon, July 7, 1916. This request was granted, and Wilson was subsequently sent to Jeddah as the British agent. FO141/738; SA138/4.

10 Arab Bulletin, December 11, 1916.

11 War Cabinet, December 9, 1916, December 16, 1916, CAB23/1. Balfour to Wingate, December 15, 1916, SA144/5.

12 Major H.D. Pearson (British official in Jeddah) to Wingate, December 21, 1916, FO141/825.

Sharīf was said to have wanted European reinforcements in order to bolster the small Arab garrison at Rabegh. Wingate, who still advocated sending additional troops, told the Arab Bureau that he wished to be assured in writing that the Sharīf did not want more troops. Wingate urged that the Sharīf be told that the British brigade would not be permanently stationed in the Hījāz, that no Moslem troops were available, and, finally, that if the offer was refused pleas for reinforcement at a later date would not be considered. In conclusion, Wingate expressed hope that the Sharīf had refused the British offer on good grounds and not merely upon religious or pro-Turkish considerations<sup>13</sup>. On January 1, Wingate wired the Foreign Office that, although the Sharīf still objected to Christian troops, it might be possible to accept the French offer to send Senegalese troops. Wingate recommended that the French dispatch both the Senegalese troops and the French brigade stationed in Suez to the Hījāz. In the interim, Wingate planned to strengthen the naval forces outside Rabegh<sup>14</sup>.

The Foreign Office replied that it was impossible to send the Senegalese troops, as there had been a tribal uprising near Jibouti, and the troops were occupied in subduing that revolt<sup>15</sup>. Wingate's telegram of January 1 caused

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13 Wingate to Arab Bureau, December 21, 1916, FO141/825.

14 Wingate to Foreign Office, January 1, 1917, FO141/825; Balfour Papers, FO800/200.

15 Foreign Office to Wingate, January 5, 1917. The French offer of the Senegalese battalion had been reported by the Foreign Office to McMahon and Wingate on November 11, 1916, FO141/825.

Robert Cecil to dispute the ability of the Foreign Office to decide purely military matters concerning operations in the Hijāz. He reasoned that the War Office ought to have been in charge of deciding matters of troop deployment and military operations. The dual control of the War Office and the Foreign Office in regard to the operations in the Hijāz created confusion. Although Wingate was on the active military list, he looked solely to the Foreign Office for his instructions. Relations between the War Office and the Foreign Office were sometimes strained, and it was difficult to co-ordinate their policies. Furthermore, as the War continued, duties increased in both offices, and neither could spare the time or personnel to develop the proper administration to direct the British officials who were involved with the Arab revolt. Thus Balfour, while agreeing with Cecil that the system was cumbersome, remarked that its reform would have to be discussed between the two offices at a later date<sup>16</sup>. In the meantime, officials in Cairo and the Hijāz continued to report to the Foreign Office for instructions.

In Cairo, Wingate remained preoccupied with the pressing problem of keeping the Sharīf's forces from defeat. On January 4, news arrived that after reconsidering the matter, the Sharīf had decided to accept the British offer to send troops<sup>17</sup>. Wingate reported that he was immediately dispatching the troops from Suez<sup>18</sup>. The Foreign Office replied that the War Cabinet

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16 These remarks are found on the note accompanying Wingate's dispatch of January 1, 1917. Balfour Papers, FO800/200.

17 Pearson to Wingate, January 4, 1917, FO141/825.

18 Wingate to Foreign Office, January 6, 1917, FO141/825.

could not authorise sending British troops unless the Sharīf requested it in writing. Their acceptance was further qualified by the demand that the Sharīf agree to be responsible for Christian troops in the Ḥijāz. Furthermore the Sharīf was instructed to issue a proclamation explaining the reasons British troops were fighting in the Ḥijāz<sup>19</sup>. These demands were duly relayed to the Sharīf.

Foreign Office scepticism regarding the Sharīf's sincerity in requesting British troops was shared by other British officials in the Ḥijāz and the Arab Bureau. Previous to Wingate's telegram of January 1, Wilson cabled the Arab Bureau that he foresaw difficulties arising from sending troops solely on the strength of one telegram from the Sharīf's government - a telegram which the Sharīf could easily repudiate in the future. Then, too, Wilson surmised that the Sharīf needed time to prepare his population for the arrival of Christian troops. Colonel Brémont of the French Mission to the Ḥijāz<sup>20</sup>, agreed with Wilson. Brémont thought eight days of preparation were necessary, while Wilson estimated that at least a fortnight would be required<sup>21</sup>.

After receiving the Foreign Office demands for assurances of his sincerity, the Sharīf refused the British troops<sup>22</sup>. On January 19, another

19 Foreign Office to Wingate January 8, 1917, FO141/825

20 For an account of the French participation in the Arab revolt and of the French Mission see: Ed. Brémont, Le Hedjaz dans la Guerre Mondiale (Paris, 1931).

21 Wilson to Arab Bureau, January 7, 1917, FO141/825.

22 Wingate to Foreign Office, January 12, 1917, FO141/825.



repudiation of the request was received. Owing to the Sharīf's final rejection of the British troops, Wingate recommended that the troops stationed in Suez and ready for duty in the Hījāz be transferred to other battle stations<sup>23</sup>.

Fortunately for those committed to the furtherance of the Arab revolt, the expected Turkish advance on Rabegh did not materialise, and British military commanders realised that the Turkish forces were in no position to launch offensives against Arab garrisons supported by the British Navy. With this fact in mind, the British began to reconsider the possibilities of military operations in the north<sup>24</sup>.

Murray, the commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, advised against attacking 'Aqaba or the Hījāz railway, because he believed that any damage inflicted at these points would merely be transitory<sup>25</sup>. On the other hand, Wingate regarded a military movement in the north as necessary<sup>26</sup>. On January 15, Fayṣal's column left Umm Lahaj for Wajh and captured it with British naval aid on January 25<sup>27</sup>. After the conquest of Wajh, forays into the north seemed more feasible. Wingate was encouraged to such an extent that he wrote to William Robertson in the War Office:

23 Wingate to Foreign Office, January 19, 1917, FO141/825.

24 Lawrence, p.224-26.

25 Murray to Wingate, January 22, 1917, SA145/1.

26 Wingate to Foreign Office, January 29, 1917, FO141/825.

27 Arab Bulletin, January 19 and February 6, 1917.

The Arab leaders have always beautiful plans and describe them most plausibly, but - and this is a new and encouraging feature - some of them of late have actually matured. 28

However, the possibility of a military drive into the north raised the problem of French and Arab claims in Syria. Since August 1916, Brémont and his French Mission had been operating in the Ḥijāz in co-operation with the British. The Mission served primarily to protect French interests which were theoretically assured by the Anglo-French Treaty of May 16, 1916. The contents of this treaty, more commonly known as the Sykes-Picot agreement, had not been officially communicated to the Sharīf by either the British or the French. There are, however, indications that the Sharīf was aware, at least after Jamāl Pasha's speech in Beirut on December 6, 1917, on the agreement, of the general context of the treaty, which divided the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire into areas of interest between the French and the British<sup>29</sup>. Wingate and his advisers were clearly aware of the treaty and its clauses<sup>30</sup>. On several occasions, these officials had expressed

28 Wingate to Robertson, February 21, 1917, SA163/2.

29 Elie Kedourie, England and the Middle East: the destruction of the Ottoman Empire (1914-1920) (London, 1956), p.107. Newcombe note, May 20, 1917, noted that the Sharīf had been told of the contents of the treaty. FO882/16.

30 Wingate's papers contain a coloured map dividing the area along the lines contained in the Anglo-French agreement. Clayton referred to this map as early as December 1915, five months before the treaty was actually signed. SA135/7.

concern lest clauses in the agreement conflict with the arrangement reached with the Sharīf in the Ḥusayn-McMahon correspondence<sup>31</sup>. For the British, the French interests in Syria were matters of principal concern when attempting to formulate policy in regard to Arab military operations. The situation was further complicated by British interests in Palestine; these will not be recounted in this study albeit the question of the status of Palestine was a consideration whenever the War Cabinet discussed the Middle East or the Arab Revolt.

Both the French interests in Syria and the Zionist plans in Palestine were discussed in the Cabinet meeting of April 3, 1917. At this time Lloyd George and Lord Curzon stressed the fact that Great Britain should not be committed to any agreement which would be prejudicial to her best interests after the War. This meeting ended with Lloyd George's exhortation that caution be exercised and that the Cabinet be kept informed of all developments<sup>32</sup>. This

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31 Clayton to Wingate, January 14, 1916. 'The settlement of the Syrian question on the lines of the papers I enclose, however, has made things very difficult and it is hard to see how we can go on negotiating much longer, without laying ourselves open to a charge of breach of faith, unless we honestly tell the Arabs that we have made Syria over to the French.' SA136/1. Hogarth note, May 3, 1916, 'I hope ... this Agreement is regarded by our Gov't now as a purely opportunist measure, with the mental reservation that it cannot but need considerable revision sooner or later.' FO882/16. The key letters of the Ḥusayn-McMahon correspondence are those which contain boundary delineations. Ḥusayn to McMahon, July 14, 1915; McMahon to Ḥusayn, October 24, 1915; McMahon to Ḥusayn, December 13, 1915; Ḥusayn to McMahon, January 1, 1916, CAB21/154.

32 Cabinet Meeting, April 3, 1917. The Prime Minister, Curzon, Hardinge, Hankey, and Mark Sykes were present. CAB24/9, GT. series 372.

meeting was indicative of Great Britain's inability to formulate a definite policy in regard to the Middle East. The British government did not purposely enter into agreements textually at cross purposes with one another. in the three statements which relate to the Middle East: the Husayn-McMahon correspondence, Anglo-French agreement of May 1916, and the Balfour Declaration. The conflict arises out of the general sense of the agreements and the interpretation of them by the parties involved<sup>33</sup>. However, the British government did not take steps to clarify the misunderstandings over the agreements. Winning the War was the single most important factor involved. Officials continued to believe that disagreements over boundaries could be settled at the Peace Conference. Therefore, diplomats like Wingate had to function without clear instructions on policy. Because he believed that the Arab revolt would help to win the War, Wingate was willing to support it and to leave the intricate problems of boundary settlements until after the peace.

In a letter to Sultan Husayn in Egypt, Wingate touched upon this point, but did not elucidate. As he wrote to Hardinge, it was difficult to

... explain to him /the Sultan/ that our initiation and support of the Sherifian movement was mainly a war measure, that we had no illusions as to the difficulty - if not impossibility - of the Sherif being able to weld together all these heterogeneous Arab units, that we were attempting to create some Islamic modus vivendi which would take the place of the Turk when expelled from the Holy Places of Islam, and that we

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33 R.M.Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent (1516-1922) (London, 1966) p.271. Kedourie, pp.29-66.

fully realised it was impossible that the Sherif would ever acquire such widespread authority in the Islamic world as to secure his election as Khalif... on the other hand I pointed out to him that nothing succeeds like success. 34

While Wingate was momentarily concerned with placating the Sultan's fears about the growing power of the Sharīf, Sykes resumed negotiations with the Sharīf to resolve the confusion which had arisen over the boundaries in Syria. In a letter to Maurice Hankey, Secretary to the Cabinet, Sykes noted that Great Britain's 'best card is that France cannot make good with the Arabs without Britain's aid.'<sup>35</sup> For his part, Hardinge felt that Sykes underestimated the importance the French attached to their sphere of influence in Syria<sup>36</sup>. Regarding this matter, the Sharīf wrote to Wingate that, because he wished to preserve friendly relations with Great Britain, he wanted to postpone further discussion of boundaries<sup>37</sup>. In May 1917, Sykes and Picot visited the Sharīf in Jeddah. In Wingate's words they were 'to discuss how best to set on a firm foundation the independence of the Arab races.'<sup>38</sup> This

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34 Wingate to Hardinge, April 17, 1917, SA174/4; HP, Vol. III (31), 1917. The Sultan persistently raised the issue of the successor to the Caliphate. The Sultan viewed the Sharīf and his followers with suspicion and described them as a 'canaille.' A canaille is a mob or a rabble. J.W.A. Young, 'A little to the East: experiences of an Anglo-Egyptian Official (1899-1925),' unpublished MS, PPC. According to Young, the administration in Mecca was run on regulated blackmail.

35 Sykes to Hankey, April 7, 1917, CAB21/96.

36 Hardinge to Wingate, April 19, 1917, HP, Vol. III(31), 1917.

37 Sharīf to Wingate, April 28, 1917, FO141/737.

38 Wingate to Sharīf, May 14, 1917, FO141/757.

meeting was probably precipitated by the Bolshevik publication of the terms of the Anglo-French treaty and Jamāl's speech of December 6.

The meeting ended in a deadlock, as the Sharīf refused to concede any territory. To reinforce his demands, he threatened to resign, unless all the lands agreed to in the Ḥusayn-McMahon correspondence were given to the Arabs.

He Sykes must have made it clear to Your Excellency that the essence of my report - which is really evident and does not require any interpretation - is that if the frontiers of the Arab lands are not to be the same as has been agreed with Great Britain, I will be obliged by my good-will to both Great Britain and to my country and race finally and decidedly to withdraw. 39

Wingate answered that he sincerely hoped that 'before long the efforts of Your Highness' Arms may result in the complete expulsion of the enemy from the Arabian lands, and the freedom of the Arab peoples',<sup>40</sup>. However, in May, Wilson reported that Faysal had agreed to accept a position of the French in Syria identical to that which the British held in Mesopotamia. Wilson predicted that the agreement implied certain perils, because the Sharīf's concept of the British position in Mesopotamia differed from British interpretation of the same position. He reiterated that the French and the British had used the word 'Syria' vaguely, and that the disparity over the territory to which this term referred would persist until Great Britain frankly told the

39 Sharīf to Wingate, June 19, 1917, FO141/757.

40 Wingate to the Sharīf, June 29, 1917, FO141/757.

Sharīf the terms of the agreement with the French<sup>41</sup>. Stewart Newcombe, in the Arab Bureau, agreed with Wilson, and added that the Sharīf trusted Sykes, who did not always appear to give an accurate account of matters<sup>42</sup>. Wilson continued to plead that the British determine a policy, but nothing final was decided<sup>43</sup>.

Simultaneous with the negotiations over the boundary issue, Murray made a second attempt to take Gaza and to move into Palestine. After the second offensive failed, General Allenby replaced Murray on June 27, 1917. Whereas Murray had declined to support Fayṣal's advance into the north, Allenby promptly realised the military potential of the Arab forces and gave them every encouragement. Operations in the north began, and on July 4, 1917, the Arabs took 'Aqaba<sup>44</sup>. Under the direction of a few trained British officers, the Arabs began to launch a series of attacks against the Ḥijāz railway and, in general, to make Turkish transport as difficult as possible. After the fall of 'Aqaba, Wingate wrote:

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- 41 Wilson to Newcombe (forwarded to Wingate), May 17, 1917, SA145/7. In his letter of November 5, 1915, the Sharīf had told McMahon that he consented to a temporary British presence in Mesopotamia in return for a subsidy.
- 42 Newcombe note on Wilson letter, May 17, 1917, SA145/7.
- 43 Note by Wilson, July 10, 1917, FO141/813.
- 44 Wingate sent a report of this victory to William Robertson in the War Office, July 11, 1917, CAB24/21, G.T. series 1558; Lawrence, pp.228-37. Arab Bulletin, August 12, 1917, SA206.

I would suggest that Arab success in Hedjaz, the forthcoming revolt in Syrian Hinterland are liable to bring Arabs elsewhere completely to our side and dispose them to more energetic action against Turks.

Our recent experience and history of Nile Campaign tend to show that an elementary organisation suitable to their irregular methods of warfare can very materially increase their capacity as auxiliaries and raiders. 45

This was written to Sir Percy Cox, the Chief Political Officer in Mesopotamia, who resisted British support of the Sharīf. Like most officials in Mesopotamia and India, Cox thought that the Arab revolt damaged pro-British Moslem feeling in the East and endangered its status in Mesopotamia. Wingate tried to encourage Cox and the other officials in Mesopotamia to view the Middle East as a composite, not as unrelated political entities.

Following the victory at 'Aqaba, Lawrence returned to Jeddah, where he talked with the Sharīf on July 29, 1917. During the conversation, it became clear, if it had not been so before, that the Sharīf would not countenance French annexation of Beirut or Lebanon. Lawrence and the Sharīf repeated what had been discussed during the May meeting with Sykes and Picot. In Lawrence's report of this conversation, he pointed out that the Sharīf had mentioned that there were no written records of the May meeting, and that, in general, written documents on the negotiations were scarce. While maintaining that Syria was to be independent, the Sharīf refused to discuss boundaries on the grounds that the War was still in progress and that any settlements would have to be modified according to the military state of affairs when peace



was declared. Lawrence quoted the Sharif as saying that Syria was an Arab country.

'...but I will neither take them myself nor permit anyone else to take them. They have deserved independence, and it is my duty to see they get it.'

... He is extremely pleased to have trapped M. Picot into the admission that France will be satisfied in Syria with the position Great Britain desires in Iraq. That, he says, means a temporary occupation of the country for strategical and political reasons (with probably an annual grant to the Sherif in compensation and recognition) and concessions in the way of public works ... 'The Hedjaz and Syria are like the palm and fingers of one hand and I could not have consented to the amputation of any finger or part of a finger without leaving myself a cripple.' 46

Even after reading this report, and hearing from Wilson that the Sharif was convinced he would control Syria and most of Mesopotamia, Wingate could not believe that Husayn thought he could incorporate all this territory under his government. This view, according to Wingate, was 'clearly unjustifiable'.<sup>47</sup>

It is nevertheless evident that King Hussein is hopeful that whatever may be the immediate political futures of the Arab districts outside the independent area he is relying on the Entente declarations of adherence to the principles of nationality to prevent the formal annexation of Arab districts properly so-called, thereby impinging on the conception of Arab unity and preventing for all time the creation of a federal system comprising the whole of the (Asiatic) Arab race.

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46 Lawrence note, July 30, 1917, copy sent to the Arab Bureau and to Wingate. Enclosed with Wingate's letter to Balfour, August 16, 1917, FO141/825.

47 Wingate to Balfour, August 16, 1917, FO141/825.

It will probably be advisable to postpone further discussion with the King of these political issues at any rate until the result of the present negotiations with the French is known, but we must eventually take steps to correct any erroneous opinion he may have, or profess to have formed in regard to the future administration of the Syrian littoral and Palestine and the provinces of Baghdad and Basra. 48

Wingate was clearly amenable to postponing a final confrontation with the Sharīf over territorial delimitation until the British were in a more advantageous bargaining position.

By this time, Wingate had lost command of the military aspects of the Arab revolt. With Allenby's advance into Palestine, more and more of the Arab forces came under his control. Wingate remained in charge only of those few operations in the Hijāz. This clear-cut division of command was agreeable to Wingate, who had always maintained that military matters necessitated one commander. With Arab support on his eastern flank, Allenby led his troops steadily northwards into Palestine. On December 25, Allenby entered Jerusalem, and then continued northwards, where he finally took Damascus in October 1918<sup>49</sup>. All the captured territory was placed under Allenby's direction. This disturbed French officials, who wanted a joint Anglo-French administration in the area<sup>50</sup>. To Wingate, the idea was unfeasible, and he

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48 Ibid.

49 For a study of this advance see: Arab Bulletin, 1918; Cyril Falls, Official history of the Great War: Military Operations - Egypt and Palestine, Parts I & II (London, 1930).

50 Graham to Wingate, January 11, 1918, SA167/1/4; Clayton to Wingate, January 29, 1918, SA167/1/4-5.

supported Allenby's control<sup>51</sup>. Since British troops far outnumbered the French, and British officials were largely in command, the French were not in a position to pursue their demands.

The areas of command were delineated between Allenby and Wingate in June 1918, when Wingate wrote that no disagreements had arisen between Allenby and himself, because Allenby commanded operations north of the 'Aqaba-Tabūk line, and he commanded the area south of this line<sup>52</sup>. Wingate's frequent visits to Palestine, about which he wrote favourably, indicate the co-operation and good-will which existed between the two men<sup>53</sup>. However, Allenby's arrival marked the demise of Wingate's control of the Arab revolt. After the summer of 1917, his work was limited to two objects. The first, and by far the more important, was concerned with providing the British subsidy for the Sharīf, and the second with the rivalries among the Arab tribes in the Hijāz.

Briefly, four major Arab leaders operated within the Arabian Peninsula during World War I: Ibn Rashīd, a pro-Turkish leader in the north east;

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- 51 Wingate to Graham, November 3, 1917, SA236/7; November 29, 1917, SA166/2; January 13, 1918, SA167/1/3. In the last letter Wingate expressed his confidence that Picot could be persuaded to accept British administration.
  - 52 Wingate to War Office, June 15, 1918, FO141/668; Wingate to Hardinge, July 19, 1918, SA169/2/1.
  - 53 Wingate visited the lines in November 1917, SA169/1/3. He travelled in Palestine in June and August 1918. After the June visit, Clayton intimated that Wingate was trying to pry out information, and added that he hoped the officials had been able to prevent him from doing any harm. Clayton to Mark Sykes, June 19, 1918, Sykes Papers, FO800/221. Wingate, however, was pleased with the visit and praised Allenby.

Ibn Su'ūd in Nejd; Imām Yehia in the Yemen; and Sharīf Ḥusayn in the Ḥijāz. From time to time, the Sharīf and the Imām squabbled over boundaries, but these disagreements were usually settled after a short time. The most lasting and intense rivalry was the one between Ibn Su'ūd and the Sharīf. While British officials in Egypt supported the Sharīf, the officials in India and Mesopotamia favoured Ibn Su'ūd, who, like the Sharīf, had been receiving a monthly subsidy since 1916. Wingate realised that the competition between Ibn Su'ūd and the Sharīf portended trouble.

I have had no illusions in regard to the difficulty of getting the Arab Chieftains to work together even in face of their common enemy the Turks - Indeed I think that their own internal jealousies take first place and the Turks second in their thoughts. 54

He expected that Ibn Su'ūd and the Sharīf would come to blows in the future, but hoped to delay the confrontation until after the War. Until the outbreak of hostilities over Khurma, a desert oasis over which both Ibn Su'ūd and the Sharīf attempted to extend their power, British officials had been fairly successful in preventing armed clashes, but in the summer of 1918, the Sharīf tried to reassert his authority over Khurma, and was repulsed by Ibn Su'ūd's forces. The battles irked Wingate who resented the fact that Ibn Su'ūd had been receiving aid from the British government<sup>55</sup>. The Foreign Office agreed that while the rivalry between the Sharīf and Ibn Su'ūd was a problem,

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54 Wingate to Graham, January 25, 1918, SA167/1/4.

55 Wingate to Foreign Office, July 9, 1918, SA149/2; Wingate to Hardinge, August 25, 1918, HP, Vol. III(38), 1918.

peace had to be kept between the two at all costs<sup>56</sup>. As the rivalry intensified, the Sharīf became more demanding; he requested more money and equipment, and adopted a more obdurate stand over the boundary issue in Syria.

Thus, by September 21, 1918, Wingate was advocating that the British make a statement of policy in regard to the Arabs and the Sharīf. He hoped that this would solve the problems of the Syrian boundaries and the Sharīf-Ibn-Su'ūd rivalry<sup>57</sup>. On October 5, he wrote that the Sharīf 'evidently expects more than he is going to get.'<sup>58</sup> Owing to the constant friction over the boundary settlement, Sykes and Picot returned to the Middle East for discussions in November. Wingate believed that they would be able to devise a more realistic agreement, since: 'their original agreement will need much alteration if not complete scrapping.'<sup>59</sup> By the time these negotiations had begun, the Armistice had been signed. The War had ended, and the British had not issued a statement of policy. The rivalry between Ibn Su'ūd and the

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56 Hardinge to Wingate, August 28, 1918, HP, Vol. III (39), 1918.

57 Wingate to Hardinge, September 21, 1918. Wingate was anxious for such a statement, because the Sharīf continued to threaten to resign. SA170/1; HP, Vol. IV (39), 1918.

58 Wingate to Hardinge, October 5, 1918, HP, Vol. IV (39), 1918. In his congratulatory telegram to Allenby on the fall of Damascus, Wingate wondered if the Sharīf would agree to the 'half-loaf of Sykes-Picot agreement.' Wingate to Allenby, October 3, 1918, SA170/2/1.

59 Wingate to Allenby, November 2, 1918, SA170/3/1. Walrond, Milner's former secretary, corroborated this opinion. Walrond to Milner, November 10, 1918, 'The Sykes-Picot agreement was an unfortunate one, and Sykes and Clayton were badly bluffed by Picot, but never mind, it has got to be supported if we find that it is not hostile to British-French interests in the East.' MP164.

Sharīf continued while both remained under British subsidy. For his part, Wingate thought that the Sharīf was strong enough to repulse an attack from Ibn Su'ūd; this contention was later to be proven wrong.

Finally, Wingate was concerned with obtaining and delivering the monthly British subsidy to the Sharīf. This subsidy was £125,000, until Wingate recommended, on April 23, 1917, that it be raised to £200,000, and be maintained at £225,000 for five months after the fall of Medina.<sup>60</sup> The money bought supplies and paid for the tribesmen to fight. Because the Sharīf only accepted payment in gold, the currency most widely used in the Hijāz, the British Treasury found it increasingly difficult to supply the subsidy.

Owing to the War, the Treasury was under severe strain. It therefore attempted to control stringently the allowance to the Sharīf. Wingate objected to the Treasury's unwillingness to provide the subsidy, for he felt that the Arab revolt had saved Great Britain millions of pounds and lives<sup>61</sup>. The Treasury viewed the revolt as a minor and expensive military action. For this reason, Graham informed Wingate that the Treasury had raised questions over the continuation of the subsidy<sup>62</sup>. On October 5, 1917, the Foreign Office wired that Egypt could use its gold supply for the October subsidy, but

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60 Wingate to Foreign Office, April 23, 1917, SA445/4.

61 Wingate to Graham, August 18, 1917, SA165/3/2.

62 Graham to Wingate, October 4, 1917, SA166/1/1.

that the subsidy for the following three months was forthcoming from London<sup>63</sup>. This notice was followed by a personal letter from Graham, which stated that the Treasury was to furnish the funds, but that it had been a 'wrench'<sup>64</sup> for them. Graham wondered if it had been wise to apply pressure in order to convince them that the subsidy to the Sharīf was a meritorious expenditure. Wingate regretted that the subsidy had been difficult to secure, but noted that without it the Arab revolt would collapse<sup>65</sup>.

In November, Wingate repeated his request for additional funds and recommended that the £25,000 previously reserved for the Sharīf after the capture of Medina be given to him immediately and continued for five months<sup>66</sup>. Later, Wingate wrote that the revolt had reached a critical stage which necessitated the maintenance of Fayṣal's operations in the north and the forces in the Hijāz.

Moreover, it is desirable for political reasons that King Hussein should not bear the whole brunt of operations in the Maan area and North and thus secure a preponderating voice in regard to the future settlement of the Syrian problem.

I therefore strongly urge that the Commander in Chief be empowered by the War Office to exceed the sum of £200,000 already granted for Arab operations in the North and to increase it up to a total of at least £500,000 should it be found necessary to do so.

When money is required, it is required urgently and it is not possible to await specific approval without the danger of losing opportunity. 67

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63 Foreign Office to Wingate, October 5, 1917, SA145/6.

64 Graham to Wingate, October 12, 1917, SA166/1/1.

65 Wingate to Graham, October 21, 1917, SA166/1/1.

66 Wingate to Foreign Office, November 2, 1917, SA146/8.

67 Wingate to Foreign Office, November 13, 1917, SA146/9.

On the same day, Wingate asked Allenby to write to the Foreign Office concerning the subsidy. He thought that the 'double-barrelled arrangement should melt the stony heart of the Treasury'<sup>68</sup>. The Treasury agreed to the increase, provided it did not entail further dispatch of gold from London<sup>69</sup>. Eventually an agreement was evolved with the Government of India, whereby Wilson in Jeddah could draw up to £12,000 a week covered in rupee drafts with a latitude for emergencies<sup>70</sup>.

After the Treasury had consented to the increase, Brunyate, on December 29, submitted a note complaining that this increase was drawn from the banks in Egypt. He pointed out that the funds in the National Bank of Egypt had, by law, been held as security for the note-holders, but that these had been drawn upon until the Bank's gold reserve was reduced from three and three-quarter millions to £E.675,000. Brunyate concluded that it was not equitable for the War Cabinet to authorise additional expenditure and then expect the funds to be found by the Egyptian banks<sup>71</sup>. However, the matter remained unsettled until the summer of 1918.

In July 1918, the Foreign Office reviewed the amount of financial aid the British government had given the Sharif since 1916. To July 25, 1918,

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68 Wingate to Allenby, November 13, 1917, SA146/8.

69 Foreign Office to Wingate, n.d. (Brunyate's note on it gives the date as November 17, 1917), SA149/7.

70 Wingate to Foreign Office, November 14, 1917, SA146/9.

71 Brunyate to Wingate, December 29, 1917, SA147/3.



he had received £4,500,000 in gold. Of this amount, about £1,000,000 had been recovered at Jeddah, £3,000,000 consigned from Egypt, and the balance of £500,000 consigned from the Imperial government. After reviewing these facts, the Foreign Office informed Wingate that the proportion payable in gold would either have to be reduced or the amount recovered at Jeddah increased. Supplying this large amount of gold from the Treasury grew increasing difficult as wartime expenditures expanded. Then, too, once the gold went to Arabia, the depreciation on it was high<sup>72</sup>.

For payment of the August and September subsidy, Wingate used the £400,000 sent from Australia. When funds were insufficient because of the demands made by the troops in the north, the Egyptian Ministry of Finance was forced to ask the banks in Egypt for aid. Credit Lyonnais gave £100,000 and the Banco di Roma £30,000-£35,000 in gold<sup>73</sup>; the French provided 875,000 francs in gold<sup>74</sup>. In September, Wingate submitted a statement noting that the payments to the northern troops from August 10, 1917, to September 30, 1918, had totalled £618,859/5/3<sup>74</sup>.

When he was preparing to submit a report of the financial aid given by Egypt for the revolt, Wingate asked Allenby to offer any accounts he had. He

72 Foreign Office to Wingate, July 25, 1918, SA149/2.

73 Wingate to Foreign Office, August 4, 1918, SA149/5, part 3.

74 Wingate to Foreign Office, August 6, 1918, SA149/4, part 3. The British were reluctant to accept French aid, but, owing to financial pressures, were forced to do so. Wingate to Foreign Office, July 12, 1918; Foreign Office to Wingate, July 20, 1918, SA149/2.

informed Allenby that Brunyate had suggested that further assignments of gold for Faysal's subsidy should be directly received by the military authorities.

So long as gold was being drawn from the Issue Department of the National Bank of Egypt the intervention of the Financial Adviser or of his office in withdrawing the money was desired by the Bank and was probably a real convenience. As soon as that source was depleted, it became obvious that any gold sent to Egypt for such purposes was the property of His Majesty's government . . . any advantage theretofore attaching to the intervention of the Financial Adviser appeared to me to disappear. 75

Brunyate recommended that the gold should be deposited in the Anglo-Egyptian Bank, rather than the National Bank as in the past. He added that the small sums borrowed from the National Bank and the Egyptian Treasury should be repaid.

On September 26, Wingate submitted his report in which he stated that on July 3 the gold supply in Egypt had stood at £4, 175, but that following this date £75,000 had arrived from Malta and £400,000 from Australia. Total payments to the Hijāz amounted to £552,300. Owing to the delayed arrival of the Australian shipment of gold, Wingate had been forced to borrow from the Egyptian banks. Even after this sum had been repaid, the gold reserve in Egypt remained unsatisfactory. The matter was further complicated by the continued demands for money from the Arab forces operating under Allenby<sup>76</sup>.

75 Wingate to Allenby, September 11, 1918. SA147/7. This is a direct quotation from Brunyate's report. He made another report on the gold situation on September 8, 1918, SA149/8, part 2.

76 Wingate to Foreign Office, September 26, 1918, SA149/8, part 2.

Eventually, more payments from Britain and the Imperial government were forthcoming, and the subsidies owing to the Sharīf and Faysal were met.

By the end of December 1919, the subsidy to the Sharīf totalled £2,521,335/2/2<sup>77</sup>. Of this amount, the Egyptian government was estimated to have contributed £23,057 as a gift. This sum does not include that which was lost in interest during the time that large withdrawals had been made from Egyptian reserves<sup>78</sup>.

Thus, the furtherance of the Arab revolt was of great importance to Wingate, its titular commander. Although there is a disparity between the role he assumed and the influence he exerted, Wingate's part in the revolt warrants discussion because of the time and energy he expended on its behalf. He sincerely believed in the revolt and British involvement in it; however, he did not formulate policy or military strategy concerning it. At most, Wingate was able to facilitate requests from the officers directly involved with the revolt, while keeping them informed of the directives from London.

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77 Allenby to Foreign Office, December 22, 1919, FO141/828.

78 Allenby to Foreign Office, June 3, 1919, FO371/3723.

CHAPTER IVANGLO-EGYPTIAN ADMINISTRATION  
DURING WORLD WAR I

Anglo-Egyptian officials faced two main sets of problems during the War: those related to the implementation of military demands which were to facilitate an Allied victory, and those of an internal political nature which dealt primarily with the Sultan and his ministers. The first of these problems involved military demands for men, materials, and money from the Egyptians. British officials had the task of fulfilling these requests expeditiously and efficiently.

Before heavy troop movements began in the Middle East, the demands placed upon Egypt were minimal. The Labour Corps consisted of volunteers. Similarly, only a few buildings, which could be easily converted into hospitals and way-stations for soldiers going to the Balkan battlefields or for the wounded from Gallipoli, were requisitioned<sup>1</sup>. However, as the War continued, the demands placed upon Egypt increased. After his appointment, Wingate was confronted with the problem of meeting military requests, regardless of Egyptian opposition or reaction.

As obtaining recruits for the expanding Labour Corps grew more dif-

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1 Requisitioning of materials, FO371/2365, FO141/486.

ficult, it became necessary to initiate a system of forced enlistment. At first, the Labour Corps consisted of volunteers, mostly Şa'īdīs (men from Upper Egypt) who were easily recruited. They, however, refused to enlist for more than three months, and would not re-enlist until their savings had been depleted. Upon enlistment the volunteers were given an advance of £3<sup>2</sup>. They were well fed and received four to five piastres a day, but were placed under strict supervision. The recruits worked on the Canal, in railway construction, and at the evacuation of Gallipoli, where their manual labour released soldiers for duty on the battlefield. By 1915, casualties among the Labour Corps were by 'no means rare'.<sup>3</sup> After the number of volunteers from the Şa'īdīs had been utilized, British officials found it difficult to secure further recruits, for the Egyptian population traditionally feared duty in the army which formerly had taken soldiers for an unlimited time<sup>4</sup>. When the military, in 1917, kept some of these recruits over the agreed three-month limit, popular resistance to enlistment increased. As an incentive for re-enlistment, the army offered a bounty of 100 piastres, but this was only given after a six-month tour, and to the more skilled labourers. Some others received 50 piastres, but the majority received nothing extra. Wingate

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2     A brief record of the advance of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force under the command of General Sir Edmund H.H. Allenby, July 1917 October 1918 (London, 1919).

3     Young, PPC, p.108. For a sketch of the harsh treatment occasionally received by recruits see: diaries of George H. Rose, Essex Record Office.

4     Young, PPC.

questioned the value of rewards which were so sparingly awarded, and the system gradually terminated<sup>5</sup>.

After the bounty system proved inadequate, other methods for obtaining recruits were considered, since the military demands continued to increase. In 1916 the Labour Corps numbered around 2,973, while in 1917 it totalled 89,852. Of the latter figure, about 63,500 men were stationed in Egypt and Palestine, and 16,234 men in France, Mesopotamia, and Salonica<sup>6</sup>. The administration of the Corps was divided between the Egyptian and Palestinian sectors, each of which had its own leadership. In order to deal with the increased requirements in the most efficacious manner, Wingate organised a committee to study the problem and to report on methods which might be employed to obtain additional recruits. In the Foreign Office, Graham criticised this committee, believing that a direct appeal to the Sultan would produce the desired result. Robert Cecil disagreed since he doubted that appeals to the Sultan's Imperial feelings would have much effect<sup>7</sup>. Wingate advocated that the Egyptian ministers should take the initiative, since it was awkward for British officials to ask continually for recruits. In August 1917, the committee reported that it would be unwise to repeal the proclamation of 1914

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6 P.G. Elgood, Egypt and the Army (Oxford, 1924), p.108. The figure for 1917 is from a letter written by Wingate to Milner, December 11, 1919, SA173/3/1. Elgood's figure for 1917 is 55,592. Wingate's figures for 1917 are broken down as follows: total native labourers, 47,385; camel transport corps, 20,000; horse transport, 3,200; remounts, 1,200; veterinary, 1,100; medic, 1,000; Imperial Camel corps, 280; police E.E.F., 935; Mesopotamia, 154 - 1,089; casual labour, 14,000.

7 Graham and Cecil minutes, June 1917, FO371/2932.

which had declared that Great Britain would undertake to protect Egypt during the War without Egyptian assistance<sup>8</sup>. Nor did the committee feel there was an advantage in extending the period of enlistment or in lowering the pay scale. The low volunteer rate was caused by the general prosperity, lack of loyalty to the Protectorate, and a hereditary distrust of the army. To counteract these factors, the committee recommended that the Egyptian ministers and notables launch a campaign to increase the volunteer rate<sup>9</sup>.

The findings of the committee were telegraphed to the Foreign Office, which criticised them. Officials in London did not consider that Egypt was pulling its weight in the War; they expected more willingness on the part of Egyptians to aid the Allies. Graham telegraphed to Wingate that to mitigate the displeasures of the officials, a new campaign for volunteers should be promptly initiated<sup>10</sup>. Wingate conferred with British officials and with Rushdī Pasha. They decided to raise the pay of the labourers by three to four piasters, the cost of which was to be borne by the Egyptian government, and to exempt volunteers from military service and the ghafir tax which was levied on Egyptians to pay for police protection. A propaganda programme was to be introduced, while provincial officials were ordered to stimulate recruitment as best they

8 Above, Chapter II, p. 28.

9 Report of Committee on Recruitment, Wingate to Balfour, August 20, 1917, FO407/183. The committee was composed of: Brunyate, Haines, G. Macauley, General manager of the Railroads; and several military officers.

10 Graham to Wingate, August 22, 1917, FO497/183.

could<sup>11</sup>. After reconsideration, the pay increase was refused, as the army felt that the labourers received sufficient pay, and that if their pay were increased it would be on the same scale as that of British soldiers, which was not considered fair<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, increased pay would mean increased savings, with a subsequent decrease in re-enlistment. Thus, the officials had to work within the bounds of the proclamation of 1914 and without the incentive of higher pay to persuade the Egyptians to join the Labour Corps.

Mudfirs and notables continued to exert pressure in order to obtain volunteers, until May 1918, when Allenby requested additional labourers to help in the military offensive in Palestine. Recognising the difficulties these demands created, Allenby wrote to Wingate that a revival of the corvée system was probably the only effective means of securing the necessary men<sup>13</sup>. Reluctant to embark upon such a drastic method, Wingate called on Brunyate, Haines, Cheetham, and several other British officials to consider the question. At a meeting on May 5, these officials noted that Rushdī and the Sultan both opposed the institution of conscription, but that the number of recruits had decreased

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11 Graham to Wingate, August 22, 1917, FO407/183.

12 Wingate to Foreign Office, September 19, 1917, SA165/3/1. Wingate to Graham, August 26, 1917, FO371/2928. Wingate remarked in this letter that the Financial Adviser was against the pay increase and preferred that a lump sum be given to the Labour Corps.

13 Allenby to Wingate, May 1, 1918, SA175/3/1. 'We can't get the men, and we can't go without them; and I am advised the only way to get them is compulsion or on the lines of the corvee, but paid of course at the present rate of wages. As you know, I am opposed to compulsion but we seem to be between the Devil and the Deep Sea, and I don't know how to avoid it.'



owing to the harvest and the number of casualties suffered among the labourers. The proposal for a pay increase was again rejected, this time on the grounds that the country was too prosperous for its inhabitants to be swayed by such an inducement. The idea that Chinese might be imported for the work was discarded because of the transportation problems and the likelihood of racial difficulties. Although Brunyate suggested that the Egyptian ministers assist in the effort, Wingate felt that it was impossible to persuade them to do so, since they had refused to accept coercive measures. In the absence of another solution, the officials agreed to act upon Allenby's suggestion to requisition the labour from the villages 'on a sort of corvée system',<sup>14</sup> through the mudīrs, ma'mūrs, and 'umdas.

The Sultan and his ministers were informed of the plan and asked to agree. Wingate remarked that the system of a limited corvée was the best way to secure the additional recruits without recourse to new laws<sup>15</sup>. After receiving the assent of the Sultan and the ministers (who had little choice but to agree), Wingate asked Haines to inform the Provincial Inspectors of the new system. Haines told the Inspectors that the village officials were to put the limited corvée into effect immediately and that the 'umdas were to obtain the number of recruits each village could be expected to provide: these recruits

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14 Note on the meeting, May 5, 1918, held at the Residency, SA175/3/1.

15 Wingate to Allenby, May 6, 1918, SA175/3/1.

were brought to the markaz where they were collected and transported to the area of battle. In an attempt to limit injustices which were bound to occur from this veiled conscription, the 'umdas were warned that any discrimination in gathering recruits would be duly punished<sup>16</sup>. Although the corvée system increased the number of recruits, it affected Egyptians adversely<sup>17</sup>. As early as May 26, 1918, Admiral Calthorpe, Naval Commander in the Mediterranean, remarked that the new system of collecting recruits was worse than the old corvée, and that matters were particularly serious in harvest time<sup>18</sup>. After hearing of the Sultan's objections, Hardinge wrote that if the complaints were publicised they would cause indignation<sup>19</sup>. Balfour wondered why the corvée had been reinstated<sup>20</sup>. Graham justified it by saying:

The Military authorities insist on a constant supply of Egyptians to act as camel men, stevedores, carriers, labourers ... nor was the voluntary system encouraged by the return to their villages of early volunteers from Gallipoli or Sinai, minus legs and arms and the delays of the military authorities in awarding compensation. 21

Neither Hardinge nor Balfour was convinced by Graham's arguments until he had spoken with them personally and explained the needs of the military for the

16 Wingate to Allenby, May 7, 1918, SA148/9. Haines note to Inspectors, n.d. (circa May 8, 1918), SA175/3/1.

17 The system gained immediate results as the following indicates. On May 5, the day of the meeting at the Residency, recruits numbered 105; on May 6, 164; May 7, 414; May 15, 1355; May 25, 1289. Daily recruiting returns, May 1918, SA148/9.

18 Note by Calthorpe, May 26, 1918, SA171/1, FO371/3202.

19 Hardinge minute on Calthorpe report, FO371/3202.

20 Ibid., Balfour minute.

21 Ibid., Graham minute.

labourers<sup>22</sup> .

The Sultan continued to oppose the corvée and particularly the unfair methods utilised by the local officials<sup>23</sup>. Rushdī, to whom Wingate had spoken concerning the policy of recruitment, attempted to placate the Sultan, but this had little effect, and complaints continued. Finally, Haines suggested that criminals and 'roughs'<sup>24</sup> be employed in the Labour Corps. Allenby firmly rejected this proposal, believing these elements to be both physically and mentally inferior, an unruly group that would be difficult to discipline<sup>25</sup>. By August 1918, the recruitment of 'compulsion by persuasion' had increased the size of the Labour Corps to 123,035<sup>26</sup>. Although complaints were systematically investigated as grievances persisted, the increase did not occur without some abuses arising from over-zealous local officials<sup>27</sup>.

When the War ended, Wingate quickly asked Allenby to release the men in the Labour Corps and to cease recruiting. Allenby, however, under pressure to maintain railway construction and surveillance, was unable to grant the request. Indeed, he did not anticipate any decrease in the required numbers

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22 Ibid.

23 Haines to Wingate, July 27, 1918, SA169/3/1.

24 Haines to Wingate, August 2, 1919, SA169/2/1.

25 Ibid.

26 Wingate to Milner, December 11, 1919, SA175/3/1. Harmsworth, in Parliament, on March 31, 1919, stated that the greatest number of men in the Corps at one time was 95,829. Great Britain, 5, Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CXIV (1918), 853.

27 Wingate to Balfour, September 15, 1918, FO371/3199.

of Egyptian labourers, nor did he advocate bonuses for those in the service<sup>28</sup>. Wingate could do little about this development, although he recognised the potential danger of prolonging a system which aggravated the Egyptians. Haines, too, warned that trouble would result if conscription were to continue until February 1919.

The time has come when I consider political reasons should over-ride military considerations, and I would beg most earnestly for your support ... My proposition, therefore, is that we should do our best to obtain as many real volunteers for the Egyptian Labour Corps as possible for the Army in February, giving the Mudirs instructions to cease all measures of compulsion. 29

Haines added that several mudirs had been injured while trying to obtain volunteers<sup>30</sup>. The continued recruitment of men obviously caused dissatisfaction among the Egyptians. These grievances were multiplied by the shortage of foodstuffs caused by military requisitioning.

To feed the soldiers stationed in Egypt and Palestine, military officers were forced to collect grain and other essentials from Egyptian and Sudanese farmers. The effect of these collections upon the Egyptian economy is closely related to the economic repercussions of the War. Egypt's main crop was cotton, a commodity in wide demand during wartime. Thus, Egyptian cotton growers and merchants were in a position to gain a considerable profit from the increased sales. With the exception of a brief interlude directly after the beginning of the War, when the cotton market experienced a moment of panic,

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28 Allenby to Wingate, November 17, 1918, FO371/3199.

29 Haines to Wingate, January 11, 1919, FO141/667.

30 Ibid.

which was halted by the British guarantee of the 1914 cotton crop, the prices of cotton steadily rose throughout the War<sup>31</sup>. Rising prices encouraged cotton growers to extend their acreage of cotton which, of course, decreased the amount of land devoted to the cultivation of cereals. As the army demanded more and more cereals, the British officials in Egypt were forced to limit by law the amount of land which could be planted in cotton. In 1914 a decree was issued limiting the amount of cotton to be grown in basin-irrigated areas and in Upper Egypt. In effect, this limited cotton cultivation to about one-third of the total crops grown in Egypt in 1915, in place of 77% in 1914<sup>32</sup>.

After the production of cotton rose in 1916, Wingate had to find a balance between the rising cotton cultivation and army demands for more cereals. Limiting the area devoted to cotton was difficult, since the buyers in Lancashire wanted a ready supply of cotton at the lowest possible prices, and once the area planted in cotton diminished, prices naturally rose. Although crops of barley, wheat, and sugar-cane were reported to be above average in 1917<sup>33</sup>, in August, British officials declared another reduction in the amount of land to be cultivated in cotton. This decree prohibited landlords and tenants from growing cotton over more than one-third of their land. Owing to this law, 1,315,572 feddans were cultivated in cotton in 1918 as compared to

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31 In July 1964 prices were quoted at £9.10. per pound and on March 23, 1916, at £11. 13. Great Britain 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), LXXXI (1916), 1526. In October 1914, the cotton crop was guaranteed to £E4,875,000 to be covered in Egyptian Treasury bills; by December the cover provided was £E2.35 millions. National Bank of Egypt 1898-1948 (Cairo, 1948), p.40.

32 Wingate to Foreign Office, September 11, 1917, SA165/3/1.

33 The Times, June 5, 1917.

1,755,000 feddans out of a cultivated area of 5,023,000 feddans in 1914<sup>34</sup>.

To enforce this law, the Cotton Seed Control Board, consisting of five British members, was established. This Board set prices and arranged for the purchase and shipping of the cotton for the British government. Although the idea for creating the Board may not have been his own, Wingate received praise for promptly initiating this control<sup>35</sup>.

Both the Sultan and Rushdī expressed concern over the effect that the enforced prohibition of cotton cultivation would have upon the Egyptians. They insisted on knowing why the army demands for cereals were so high and warned that, if the price of cotton dropped, there was a possibility of a revolt<sup>36</sup>. Wingate replied that the decision to plant cereals instead of cotton had been taken to eliminate the necessity of importing foodstuffs, which had occurred prior to the War<sup>37</sup>.

The army estimated that it would need 37,000 tons of barley, 11,500 tons of wheat, and 500 tons of beans a month for 1918<sup>38</sup>. This meant that

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34 A feddan is 1.038 acres. Wingate to Foreign Office, August 7, 1918, SA169/3/1.

35 Wingate to Foreign Office, August 15, 1917; Foreign Office to Wingate, August 18, 1917, SA165/2/2.

36 Sultan Ḥusayn to Wingate, August 25, 1917, SA154/1.

37 'Analysis of the import of commodities shows a general decline in articles of food and clothing, the main exception being cereals and flour, which have entered in greatly increased quantities to supplement a diminished local production.' Great Britain, Cd. 7358, (1914), Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul General, on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1913, p.14.

38 Allenby to Wingate, September 13, 1917, SA165/3/1.

Egypt would have a deficit of about 200,000 tons of cereal, since it could not supply both the needs of the military and its local inhabitants. Wingate hoped that cereal production would be above average, so that the deficit would not be too great, as it was impossible - owing to political considerations - to lower cotton cultivation below one third of the total cultivated area<sup>39</sup>. Egypt was able to provide the necessary cereals for the military, although rising prices and eventual shortages in native markets indicate an insufficient supply of foodstuffs.

To prevent unnecessary inflation of cotton prices, Wingate created the Cotton Control Commission in 1918. This Commission was ordered to buy all the cotton crop for 1918. There was no compulsion for the growers to sell to this Commission, but no other export licences were granted. Therefore, the Commissioner was able to set prices for buying and selling. The profit made by the Commission, after world prices exceeded the estimates, was eventually returned to the Egyptian government. Interestingly, no British civil servant sat on the Commission, which was administered by leading businessmen, bankers, and cotton-growers. Wingate's report on the Commission indicates that the government kept a close watch on its activities, but preferred to remain inactive and not participate directly in its functions<sup>40</sup>. The Commission

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39 Wingate to Graham, August 30, 1917, SA165/2/2. Also see: Food supply report, September 8, 1917, SA165/3/1.

40 Wingate to Foreign Office, February 24, 1918, SA167/2/2. Elgood discusses the Commission, while noting that the government had little to do with it. However, Wingate's report does not entirely agree with Elgood's analysis. Also see: A.E. Crouchley, The Economic development of modern Egypt (London, 1938).

is another example of the closer government control in commercial activity which was precipitated by the War.

Indeed, the government took steps to control or to regulate three aspects of Egyptian economic life during the War. Measures of control were exercised in supply requisition, banking, and price maintenance. The government attempted, through the Supplies Control Board, to facilitate the collection of cereals for the army and to control rising prices. This Board was created under the leadership of British officials in September 1917<sup>41</sup>. James Craig<sup>42</sup> became head of the Board, which controlled internal transport of goods and exports and imports<sup>43</sup>. Owing to the traditional governmental hesitancy to become involved in controlling the economic structure of the country, the Supply Control Board was not created until the composition of imports and exports had already substantially changed. Because of the War, imports from the Central powers and Turkey, from whom Egypt had formerly received large quantities of goods, were stopped. In most cases, these goods were replaced by similar products made in Great Britain or her colonies, but there is evidence that at least a few products ceased to be imported and were manufactured in

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41 The Times, September 24, 1917; September 29, 1917.

42 James Craig was Controller, Statistical Department, from 1913-1917; he was Financial Secretary for the Egyptian Ministry of Finance from 1928-1934.

43 Supplies Control Board report, James Craig, n.d. (circa 1918), SA244/3.



Egypt<sup>44</sup>. Census returns of 1917 reveal that native manufacture, especially of textiles, expanded during the War<sup>45</sup>. This expansion took place without the encouragement of the British administration, which did not wish to rush industrialisation in Egypt. In 1918, The Times quoted Brunyate's views on industrial development for Egypt:

Whilst believing in the process of gradual industrial development, which will eventually add materially to the available resources of taxation, none the less, he is convinced that progress must be slow and certain, and only the most careful scrutiny of all expenditures can bring even moderate progress within the limits of the resources available. 46

It is evident from this remark that the British officials were willing to participate in those facets of the economic system which directly affected Egypt's wartime contributions, but preferred Egyptians to import manufactured goods from Great Britain or her colonies.

The governmental slowness in adopting methods to deal with rising prices is another indication of British reluctance to participate actively in the economic processes. Then, too, British officials had little experience with the effects

44 The Import trade of Egypt (1912-1916) (Cairo, 1917). Egyptian imports in 1916 reached £E30,072,213 with £E15,010,231 coming from Great Britain. Goods from the British colonies made up the majority of the remainder. Mohammed Ali Rifaat, The Monetary system of Egypt: an inquiry into its history and present working (London, 1935). Rifaat states that in 1919, 46.0% of Egyptian imports came from the United Kingdom and 53.0% of its exports went to that country. Appendix II.

45 The census of Egypt taken in 1917 (Cairo Government Press, 1921).

46 The Times, April 20, 1918.

of wartime demands upon prices, and were, therefore, uncertain of the most efficient manner with which to deal with these problems. The presence of numerous Allied troops in Egypt not only caused a change in the structure of importation, but also increased demands for foodstuffs and other necessities<sup>47</sup>. With greater demand and scarcity, the prices of goods, especially of fuel products and staple foods, rose alarmingly. Although the British press contended that price increases only affected Europeans living in Egypt<sup>48</sup>, a glance at the actual price rises gives a contrasting picture.

Using the price index of 100 as the level of prices in 1914, the price of bread in 1915 was 97. This rose to 203 in 1917. Likewise, the price of petrol rose from 122 in 1915 to 209 in 1917. Even after prices on wheat and other foodstuffs were fixed on April 1918, they were approximately double the pre-war figures<sup>49</sup>. The Supplies Control Board endeavoured to enforce fixed prices, but with wartime demands, hoarding, and the black market, this proved to be difficult<sup>50</sup>. By 1918, the cost of foodstuffs had become a serious matter. Realising the problem, Craig appealed to Brunyate for co-operation

47 Import trade, 1916.

48 The Times, January 19, 1917, October 30, 1917, April 20, 1918.

49 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 1, 1917, FO369/926. Rifaat placed the overall price index of 1917 at 176, at 211 in 1918, at 231 in 1919, and at 312 in 1920. Also see: The Times, April 8, 1918.

50 The Egyptian Gazette and Le Journal Officiel remarked upon the scarcity of goods and the rising prices from 1915 until 1919. The Egyptian Gazette, March 28, 1918, noted that the prosperity in Egypt was more apparent than real.

in regulating the prices through a national scheme of control. He wanted to create wage-control boards in each town to adjust wages to the rising prices, and to exercise the fullest possible control on price levels. Craig warned that unless these solutions were immediately realised British officials could expect an 'Insurrection in Egypt in the next twelve months'.<sup>51</sup> These solutions were given to Brunyate not to Wingate, who was obviously not regarded by officials as the man to see that such laws were promulgated. Rather than override Brunyate's objections to Craig's programme, Wingate allowed him to veto the plan to control prices. Wingate, when permitting Brunyate to reject Craig's scheme, remarked that he trusted the Minister of Interior was prepared to deal with any disturbances created in the towns because of the shortage of breadstuffs<sup>52</sup>. After his programme was refused, Craig resigned. He was replaced by Morton (Ross) Taylor, who knew little about supply control, but who also warned of the approaching crisis. The press in Egypt complained persistently of the failure to control prices and of the scarcity of fuel<sup>53</sup>. By allowing the more conservative British civil servants, particularly Brunyate, a free hand in dealing with the rising prices and scarcities, Wingate prevented the creation of organisations to deal with these problems. Nor did he ascertain

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51 Craig report, 1919, SA244/3. The report is a history of Craig's continued difficulties in securing acceptance for his schemes.

52 Wingate to Brunyate, February 4, 1918, SA167/2/4. Brunyate termed Craig's scheme 'hare brained'.

53 al-Muqattam, March 23, 1917, November 16, 1917; al-Umma, September 1, 1918; al-Waṭan, September 9, 1918.

that the Minister of Interior was prepared to deal with disturbances arising from these disruptive events. These factors played a large role in facilitating the Nationalists' task of gaining support in the countryside during 1918 and 1919.

Although British control of prices and supplies in Egypt was half-hearted at best, the officials did take prompt action to ensure an adequate supply of bank notes for the purchase of cotton. Beginning in August 1914, the government agreed to a bank note issue which allowed for an increase in the money in circulation without the movement of gold, the transfer of which was severely restricted as a consequence of the War. In 1916, when the notes could no longer be covered by gold reserves in London or Egypt, they were covered by British Treasury Bills. This tied the British and Egyptian monetary systems even more closely than previously. The note issue of 1919 totalled £E39,900,000, with the bulk of the cover in British Treasury Bills. The total issue at the end of 1919 was £E67,300,000<sup>54</sup>, while in 1920 the issue reached £E75,000,000 with £E3,330,000 covered in gold<sup>55</sup>. The note issue established the exchange with Great Britain and made more economical use of the gold, which, by the end of the War, was scarce. However, the concomitant effect of the issue was to deflate the currency value, thus exposing it to an unlimited depreciation which

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54 L.G. Roussin, 'The present monetary regime in Egypt', trans. from French in L'Egypte contemporaine (February, 1924), p.5, SA107/16.

55 Great Britain, Cmd. 957, (1920), Reports by His Majesty's High Commissioner on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Sudan, 1914-1919, p.7. Crouchley, p.204. He rounds off the gold coverage to £E3,400,000.

contributed to the rise in prices<sup>56</sup>.

Owing to the exigencies of the War upon the monetary system and upon Egyptian resources, Edward Cecil informed Wingate that expenditure would be increased after the War, thereby forcing the administration to use some of the Reserve Fund, then valued at seven million pounds. According to Cecil, it was undesirable to allow the Fund to drop below five million pounds. He therefore urged that the administration should not begin new projects which entailed large capital output until stability had been re-established<sup>57</sup>. Cecil's fear that Wingate planned to initiate costly projects was one of the main causes for the split between them. Throughout this period, and until Cecil's departure in 1917, a conservative financial policy was followed. After Cecil's departure, Brunyate, acting Financial Adviser, carried on Cecil's policies. It is not too surprising that these advisers acted in such a manner, for they wished to maintain steady economic progress for Egypt, while avoiding unnecessary debts and expenditures. When the War intensified the monetary demands placed upon Egypt, the advisers became even more reluctant to accept expenditures which were not vital to the economy. The demands caused by the War were not only placed upon Egyptian resources, but also took the form of requests for monetary gifts from the government and private individuals.

The Red Cross campaigns were among the largest appeals for individual

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56 Roussin, p.6.

57 Cecil Reserve Fund and financial position report to Wingate, January 11, 1917, SA164/8.

contributions for the war effort. The campaigns were initiated in 1915 and continued until the Armistice. They were led by British officials and their wives. Wingate earnestly worked for these drives and was able to report at the end of the War that Egypt and the Sudan had given £400,000<sup>58</sup>. This money had been collected among the native populace as well as among the foreign communities in Egypt. There was evidence that, in their enthusiasm to please British officials, the mudirs and 'umdass misused their authority in order to convince the Egyptians to give to the Red Cross, an organisation which benefited Allied soldiers, and was purely European in administration<sup>59</sup>.

The Egyptian government also made monetary contributions towards the War. Brunyate estimated in 1918 that Egypt had given £E3,000,000 in gifts, lower railway rates, and decreased import taxes. This was in addition to the £E548,928 which had been given to the Sudan during the War, and the £E70,000 which had been earmarked for the expenditure of the Darfur expedition<sup>60</sup>. The War Office, which only took into account those amounts given in currency, not contributions like those given to the Arab revolt or in intangibles like lower railway fees, deprecated the smallness of the Egyptian

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58 Wingate report on Egyptian work for the Red Cross to Arthur Stanley (Red Cross director in London), June 30, 1918, SA166/1. This report lists the membership in Cairo, all of which was European. For an account of the work done by Wingate for the Red Cross see: The Egyptian Gazette, 1917, which periodically noted Wingate's speeches on behalf of the Red Cross.

59 Lt. Col. C.F. Ryder intelligence report, April 23, 1919. This report told of an 'umda who had collected £E1,500. When asked if all the donors had given willingly, he replied, 'Willing'. Every Milleme was wrung from them by force.' FO141/780.

60 Memorandum on the suspense account, February 25, 1918, FO371/3199.

contribution. When the War Office contrasted Egypt's contribution with the £100, million given by India, it felt that Egypt was not doing her part. In justification, Graham noted that India had 35 times the population of Egypt, and, that owing to the Capitulations, Egypt could not levy new taxes in order to secure a greater proportion of the wealth enjoyed by the landowners, merchants, and businessmen<sup>61</sup>.

The question of the Capitulations was considered by British officials throughout the War, for they were eager to abolish the system. A committee, with Brunyate as Chairman, was created in April 1917 and met 75 times to consider the matter before issuing its report in March 1918<sup>62</sup>. The British desire to eliminate the Capitulations irritated foreign and religious communities in Egypt, as they were the primary benefactors from the system. Wingate, along with his colleagues, warmly supported the abolition of the Capitulations, which limited British governmental freedom, and restricted a more equitable taxation policy<sup>63</sup>. Various foreign residents in Egypt wrote against the abolition

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61 Wingate to Foreign Office, March 11, 1918; Graham minute of May 3, 1918, FO371/3199. Egypt's population was 12,718,255, Census, 1917.

62 For more on the Capitulations see: The law affecting foreigners in Egypt: as the results of the Capitulations with an account of their origin and development (Edinburgh, 1907); George Ambrose Lloyd, Egypt since Cromer (London, 1933). The work of the Commission is discussed in 'Commission des Capitulations: etat des travaux', L'Egypte contemporaine (1918); also, SA161.

63 Wingate to Graham, March 11, 1918. Wingate wanted the Capitulations to be abolished, but wished to maintain martial law until that time. SA168/1/2.

of the Capitulations, but their grievances were not seriously considered by the British. For this reason, the Egyptian Nationalists were later to temporise on the subject of Capitulations, while at various times they even stated their opposition to the abolition of the system. Since the matter was deferred for final decision until after the War, [Wingate took no part in the actual abolition of the Capitulations<sup>64</sup>.

These economic and internal problems occurred simultaneously with the change of the Sultanate and movements to modify Egypt's legal status vis-à-vis Great Britain. It is impossible to speak of the changes regarding the Sultanate envisaged by British officials without noting their views on the establishment of a Protectorate or annexation<sup>65</sup>. Wingate favoured annexation even after the declaration of the Protectorate in 1914; he did not change his mind concerning this subject after becoming High Commissioner. Indeed, in every dispatch concerning Sultan Ḥusayn, Wingate spoke of annexation. Sultan Ḥusayn was well known for his pro-British inclinations, but as his health declined, British officials were forced to consider a suitable successor. Prince Kamāl al-dīn, Ḥusayn's son, and Prince Aḥmad Fu'ād, son of the late Khedive Ismā'īl, were the favourite choices. Graham expressed support for Fu'ād, whom he knew was anxious to become Sultan, whereas Kamāl never manifested any interest in politics, but preferred sports and hunting<sup>66</sup>. At first, Wingate

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64 The Capitulations were abolished by the Montreux Convention, May 8, 1937.

65 See above, Chapter II, pp. 27-8.

66 Graham minute, January 25, 1917, FO371/2930.



did not reveal his preference, but merely warned that Egyptians expected more responsibility in the government after the War. For this reason, Wingate urged that the Foreign Office consider what form the British government in Egypt was to take after the War<sup>67</sup>.

The position of the military in Egypt added to the confusion, since it was impossible to judge to what extent governmental duties had been relegated to the military. Acting upon Wingate's request, both General Murray and Brunyate submitted memoranda on the extent of military government in Egypt in February 1917<sup>68</sup>. Murray contended that the civil administration had become relatively unimportant, as the military had taken over most of the important duties after the declaration of martial law. On the other hand, Brunyate maintained that the military could not exist in Egypt without the aid of the civilian administration. These memoranda were forwarded to the Foreign Office which supported Brunyate's opinion<sup>69</sup>. Later, Graham submitted a note on the future status of Egypt in which he advised against annexation and recommended the continuation of the civilian administration. Graham believed

67 Wingate to Hardinge, March 24, 1917, SA175/4.

68 Murray and Brunyate memoranda, February 1917, FO371/2930. Wingate to Balfour, February 22, 1917, Wingate had asked Murray to write the memorandum because he had expressed concern lest Wingate attempt to control both the civilian and military aspects of the Egyptian administration. Indeed, Wingate had suggested this, but his request had been refused. SA237/10.

69 Graham minute on Brunyate memorandum, March 21, 1917, FO371/2930.

that after the War the Sultan would come to England along with other 'better class Egyptians ... to pay their respects to the Protectorate'<sup>70</sup>. By stressing Egyptian support for the Protectorate, Graham was able to minimise the military control in Egypt. At a later date, Wingate annotated Graham's note with a question asking why Graham, if he had upheld the Protectorate and the Sultan's support of it, had not permitted the Egyptians to come to London after the Armistice<sup>71</sup>. Obviously, when Graham wrote the note in 1917, he expected that the Egyptians would continue to support the Protectorate and function within its framework. As events evolved, precisely the opposite occurred.

The Foreign Office opposed annexation, because it desired to retain the Egyptian administration under its own direction. Therefore, it continually fought against the transfer of the Egyptian government to the direction of the Colonial Office. In a round-robin argument, the officials in the Foreign Office asserted that to place Egypt under the Colonial Office implied annexation, and that annexation was impossible because it would be a breach of faith with the Egyptians<sup>72</sup>.

The contest between those in favour of annexation and those opposed to it continued through the spring of 1917. Wingate recommended that the Foreign Office consider the feasibility of annexation, and remarked that Sultan Husayn

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70 Graham note on the future status of Egypt, March 2, 1917, SA137/10.

71 Wingate remark on Graham note, September 1, 1920, SA137/10.

72 Hardinge minute on Graham's note, March 1917, FO371/2926.

felt that it was the most satisfactory solution<sup>73</sup>. Robert Cecil wanted to consult other officials in Egypt, but Graham declared that the opinions of most of these officials were worthless. He maintained that Cheetham could not disagree with Wingate, and that Brunyate was out of touch with native aspirations. He reported that he had asked Murray and Edward Cecil for their opinions, which had supported the continuation of the Protectorate<sup>74</sup>. Therefore, Graham wrote to Wingate that it was impossible to annex Egypt or abolish the Sultanate until some of the Egyptian princes had been given an opportunity to act as Sultan<sup>75</sup>. In the face of this strong opposition from the Foreign Office, Wingate abandoned his scheme for annexation.

It also seemed conceivable that, in the general re-allotment after the War, the Powers might consider Egypt to fall almost naturally to the British Empire. I must now, however, admit, after six months experience in my present position, and having regard to the constantly changing military and political situation, that I am no longer the ardent Annexationist I was. 76

After the scheme for annexation was rejected, the Foreign Office had, once again, to choose a successor to Sultan Ḥusayn. In the summer of 1917, Graham again recommended Fu'ād. He knew Wingate opposed Fu'ād's nomination, but was convinced that Fu'ād could be persuaded to adopt British policy. Furthermore, Graham asserted that it was better for Fu'ād to fail as Sultan

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73 Wingate to Hardinge, May 6, 1917, HP, Vol. IV(32), 1917, FO371/2930; Wingate to Hardinge, June 18, 1917, HP, Vol. V(33), 1917.

74 Graham minute on Wingate's letter to Hardinge, May 6, 1917, FO371/2930.

75 Graham to Wingate, June 7, 1917, SA164/8.

76 Wingate to Hardinge, June 17, 1917, SA237/10; HP, Vol. V(33), 1917.

than for Britain to annex Egypt<sup>77</sup>. According to Wingate, it was too early to judge whether the Protectorate would be a success or failure, but that its implementation had been greatly facilitated by the presence of a pro-British Sultan. Wingate predicted that after Husayn died the British would find it more difficult to govern Egypt<sup>78</sup>. The fear of a less pro-British Sultan than Husayn was undoubtedly one of Wingate's major reasons for desiring the annexation of Egypt. He did not feel that any of the Egyptian princes were suitable successors, whereas, if Egypt were annexed, the Sultanate would be abolished, thereby eliminating the necessity of choosing a new Sultan.

After receiving a memorandum from Clayton in support of annexation, Wingate wrote again to Hardinge<sup>79</sup>. This memorandum was written at Wingate's request. Stack, for one, thought that Wingate ought to have written officially to the Foreign Office on the subject; he wondered if Wingate had any opinions of his own or merely followed Clayton's advice<sup>80</sup>. In the light of the evidence it appears that when Wingate was faced with the combined opposition of the officials in the Foreign Office and his own subordinates, he rejected annexation,

77 Graham to Wingate, June 25, 1917, SA237/10.

78 Wingate to Balfour, July 23, 1917, SA153/8.

79 Wingate to Hardinge, July 23, 1917, SA237/10; Clayton note on annexation, July 22, 1917, SA153/8.

80 Stack to Clayton, August 5, 1917. 'It is odd that with someone having 30 years of experience of the country and holding the post of H.M.G.'s High Commissioner should ask anyone to write a dispatch on a matter of such vital importance, indeed the biggest issue in the history of Egypt since its occupation.' SA490/6.

but, after receiving support from Clayton, whose advice he valued, he reverted to his original advocacy of annexation. This wavering back and forth or inability to stand by his original policy can hardly have strengthened his position vis-à-vis the Foreign Office.

Wingate repeated his appeal for annexation in a letter on July 27 to Balfour, but the idea was again rejected. After this rebuttal, Wingate reported that Kamāl would make the best candidate for the Sultanate. He hoped to persuade him to accept the position as he was a powerful landowner in the Delta, and was generally respected<sup>81</sup>. In September, after Sultān Ḥusayn's condition worsened, Ismā'īl Sirrī Pasha, Minister of Public Works, suggested that Kamāl be selected as Ḥusayn's successor<sup>82</sup>. Sultan Ḥusayn also chose Kamāl to succeed to the throne, a policy which was supported by Wingate and the Egyptian ministers. Realising that the Egyptians were not wholly loyal to Great Britain, Wingate was particularly anxious for the selection of a pro-British Sultan.

However much we may pride ourselves on having regenerated Egypt, we must not blind ourselves to the fact that we are not popular, and that although the Egyptians would rather have us than the Turks to rule them, the influence exercised by religious and racial affinity are such strong factors that nothing short of the practical blotting out of Turkey will ever make the Egyptians as a race really loyal to British rule. 83

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81 Wingate to Balfour, August 19, 1917, SA154/1. Montagu to Hankey, November 4, 1917, CAB23/32, G.T. series 2857.

82 Wingate to Graham, September 12, 1917, SA165/2/2.

83 Wingate to Graham, August 26, 1917, SA165/2/2.

Because the majority of British officials believed Prince 'Umar Tūsūn was pro-Turkish, his candidacy for the throne was refuted. In a similar manner, Wingate feared that Fu'ād would not be easily managed. However, the Foreign Office continued to support Fu'ād. On September 22, Brunyate drafted an invitation asking Kamāl to become Sultan. 'Adlī Pasha Yakan, Minister of Education, even talked personally with Kamāl, but he refused to accept the position. The rejection was received with relief in the Foreign Office<sup>84</sup>.

On October 8, Wingate had an interview with Fu'ād, who was asked at this time to become Sultan 'according to such order of succession as shall be established by agreement between His Majesty's Government and Your Highness',<sup>85</sup>. Wingate stressed the importance of Fu'ād's adopting a 'wait and see' policy since immediate changes in the Cabinet or the Sultan's aides were undesirable<sup>86</sup>. Fu'ād accepted these conditions and the offer of the Sultanate.

Sultan Husayn died on October 9. His son's disclaimer, received at the Residency the previous day, was published in Le Journal Officiel on October 10, along with the announcement of Fu'ād's accession to the throne. On the tenth, Husayn's funeral took place. After the ceremony, Wingate wrote heartfelt letters on Husayn's loyalty to Great Britain<sup>87</sup>. There is no doubt but that Wingate

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84 Foreign Office to Wingate, September 21, 1917, SA154/1. Graham to Wingate, September 21, 1917, SA165/3/2.

85 Wingate note on the interview with Fu'ād, October 8, 1917, SA154/2.

86 Ibid.

87 Wingate to Graham, October 10, 1917; Wingate to Stamfordham, October 10, 1917, SA154/2.

had a sincere friendship with Ḥusayn and felt his loss deeply. On October 16 Fu'ād was officially recognised as Sultan in a public ceremony at which he delivered a speech drafted by Brunyate and checked by Wingate<sup>88</sup>. Since neither Wingate nor the ministers were complacent over Fu'ād's accession, they took every step to ascertain that Fu'ād would act loyally to Great Britain.

This apprehension over Fu'ād's loyalty arose after it was rumoured that he wished to bring his personal entourage into the palace to act as aides and advisers. The Egyptian ministers worried lest Fu'ād's followers should gain his complete support to the exclusion of the Cabinet. In the hope of preventing such a development, Wingate tentatively suggested that one of Fu'ād's private secretaries be British, while urging Rushdī to prevent undesirable appointments<sup>89</sup>. After Fu'ād became Sultan, Wingate heard that he planned to appoint Ismā'īl Ṣidqī Pasha<sup>90</sup> and 'Amīn Yehia Pasha<sup>91</sup> to the Sultanic household staff. Since both of these men were known to have nationalistic tendencies and Ṣidqī had been involved previously in a public scandal, Wingate opposed the appointments. Upon Wingate's behest, Rushdī persuaded Fu'ād to forego making the appointments<sup>92</sup>. This was the first indication that Fu'ād was neither

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88 Brunyate draft of Fu'ād's speech, October 8, 1917, SA154/2.

89 Brunyate to Wingate, October 3, 1917, SA154/2. Wingate to Hardinge, October 6, 1917, FO141/620. For more on the relationship among Fu'ād, Rushdī, and the Nationalists see: Elie Kedourie, 'Sa'ad Zaghlul and the British', St. Antony's Papers, No.11, Middle Eastern Affairs, No.2, ed. Albert Hourani, p.139.

90 Ismā'īl Ṣidqī had been Minister of Agriculture in 1913. He had a law degree and had studied in France. He became Prime Minister in 1930.

91 'Amīn Yehia Pasha was a wealthy notable from Alexandria.

92 Wingate to Balfour, October 18, 1917, SA154/1.

as pliable, nor as amenable to British policies, as Husayn had been.

When Edwin Montagu visited Egypt in late October<sup>93</sup>, Fu'ād made his future intentions quite clear. At a breakfast party for Montagu, Fu'ād said that Egypt was England's friend and she had only to grant their 'national aspirations'<sup>94</sup>. While Montagu pretended not to understand, Fu'ād repeated this three times. Finally, Montagu asked what national aspirations the Egyptians had. Fu'ād turned to Rushdī, and the two men replied:

'We want autonomy.'<sup>95</sup>

Following this answer, Rushdī indicated that they wished Montagu to inform Wingate of this desire. Montagu duly reported the conversation to Wingate, who replied that Fu'ād wanted to become Caliph. The conversation was also reported to Lloyd George.

Soon after this revealing discussion, during which it became evident that Rushdī and Fu'ād both desired more self-government, if not complete independence, Fu'ād made another attempt to introduce more nationalists into the Egyptian government. He proposed the appointments of Sa'd Zaghāl<sup>96</sup>

93 Montagu's visit will be discussed at greater length in Chapter V, pp.135-7.

94 Montagu diary, October 27, 1917, Lloyd George Papers, FO40/1/1.

95 Ibid.

96 Sa'd Zaghāl was Minister of Education in 1906 and Vice President of the Legislative Assembly in 1913. He married the daughter of former Prime Minister, Muṣṭafā Fahmī. His ability had been praised by Cromer when he left Egypt. However, his nationalist inclinations were equally well known.



as Minister of Agriculture, and 'Abd al-'Azīz Bey Fahmī<sup>97</sup> as Minister of Waqfs (Wuqūf) in place of Aḥmad Ḥilmī and Ibrāhīm Fathī. Although British officials realised that Fathī and Ḥilmī were not well qualified for their positions, they were inclined to support them because they were pro-British. Fathī had survived an attempt on his life in 1915 and had been a personal appointee of Kitchener<sup>98</sup>, while Ḥilmī had long supported British policies. Zaghlūl, on the other hand, was known to oppose many British policies and to have nationalist sympathies. However, his abilities were recognised, as even Sultan Ḥusayn had recommended he replace Ṣidqī after his resignation in 1915. At this time, McMahon pointed out that Zaghlūl was powerful within Egypt and had been passed over twice for a ministerial appointment. McMahon cautioned that the time would soon arrive when it would be unwise to keep Zaghlūl out of governmental circles<sup>99</sup>. However, Kitchener refused to accept Zaghlūl's appointment, and had recommended that Fathī be given the position<sup>100</sup>. Thus, when Fu'ād asked that Zaghlūl be given a ministerial post, he acted upon precedent. In echo to McMahon's warnings, Wingate wrote to Hardinge:

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97 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī was a noted lawyer in Egypt; he was a close friend of Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid and Zaghlūl, and had been a member of the Legislative Assembly.

98 Graham note, October 20, 1917, FO371/2926, FO371/2351.

99 McMahon to Foreign Office, May 14, 1916, FO141/629. McMahon to Kitchener, May 24, 1915, PRO30/57/47.

100 Foreign Office to McMahon, May 18, 1915, FO371/2351.

.... the older Ministers were chosen by K. (Kitchener) are pro-British but hardly worth retaining due to counts against them ... That the inclusion of Zaghlul and Fahmy will give the reconstituted Ministry a somewhat stronger Nationalistic tendency is undoubted, but on the other hand I am not altogether adverse to this. 101

Wingate pointed out that the two nominees were well qualified and honest. He believed that it was better to have them in the government, and tacitly on the British side, than working for the opposition outside the government.

This recommendation followed previous reports concerning the growing national sentiments among the Egyptians. Thus the inclusion of known nationalists in the Cabinet was not likely to be accepted by the Foreign Office. For Montagu had also warned that Fu'ād was easily led and would be vulnerable to nationalist intrigues. He reported that Wingate was cognizant of Fu'ād's weaknesses and had great influence with him, but that, at the same time, nationalist agitation within Egypt was a probability.

.... it is quite clear to me that there are national aspirations and desires for autonomy in Egypt as there are in India, fomented by extremists but existing to a greater or less degree, nascent or vigorous, in the minds of many, many people in Egypt. I am certain - and I think Sir Reginald Wingate would agree with me - that this problem will have to be faced in Egypt in the future ... But I must predict with confidence, nevertheless, that in the future, and in the no distant future, the spirit of nationalism, strengthened by the events of the War and based upon pride of country, will have to be considered in Egypt. The very separation of Egypt from Turkey, the very acknowledgment of the Egyptian country and nation will make this less remote than it would otherwise have been. 102

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101 Wingate to Hardinge, November 29, 1917, SA166/2.

102 Montagu to Hankey, November 4, 1917, CAB24/34, G.T. series, 2837. Montagu wrote along the same lines to Lloyd George and Philip Kerr, Lothian Papers, GD40-17-35.

In December, the question of the new ministerial appointments was further complicated by Rushdī's advocacy of the dismissal of Ḥilmī and Fathī and their replacement by Sa'īd Zaghlūl and 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī. At the same time, he urged a clear definition of British rights in Egypt and the diminution of 'abusive' British intervention. In a report submitted to Wingate, Rushdī pleaded for a division of control of Egyptian foreign affairs, which would allow Egyptians a greater responsibility in their government<sup>103</sup>. After receiving Rushdī's report, Wingate reconsidered his advice on accepting the appointments of Zaghlūl and Fahmī. Whereas he had formerly supported their nomination, after studying Rushdī's programme, Wingate decided that the nationalist trend had become too prominent and had to be halted immediately.

Rushdi Pasha's programme involves a complete break with the past. The basis of our control of Egypt is the 'advice' of H.M.G. tendered when necessary through their local representatives and the British heads of Departments. He proposes to free the Egyptian Government from this control except in certain limited respects. The whole system of our Protectorate would in my view be endangered by any such change. To ensure our position and make good our pledges to Foreign Powers we should have to introduce safeguards in the shape of defined powers of veto and direct executive control. 104

The Foreign Office treated Wingate's warning lightly after Graham remarked that Wingate overestimated the importance of Rushdī. A junior Foreign Office official suggested that Zaghlūl be appointed to the Cabinet, while the

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103 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 9, 1917, FO141/629.

104 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 9, 1917, SA166/3/2, FO141/629.

question of the relationship between Great Britain and Egypt be delayed until after the Armistice. Graham rejected Zaghlūl's appointment since Great Britain could not dismiss known pro-British ministers for two 'avowed Nationalists',<sup>105</sup>. In a telegram drafted by Graham, Wingate was ordered to retain the Cabinet as it stood. On the matter of governmental reforms, the Foreign Office wrote:

As regards the programme of Reforms you may rest assured that H.M.G. do not contemplate any abrupt departure from policy of a steady and gradual development of native institutions under British guidance and control. 106

By the time the Foreign Office directive was received, the proposed appointments and Rushdī's report had become common knowledge among Egyptian officials. Rushdī was then persuaded to apologise for his untimely report which Wingate thought had been written in order to gauge how far the British would permit the Egyptians to control the government<sup>107</sup>. In a letter to Hardinge, Wingate described Zaghlūl as a mauvais coucheur, but noted that Rushdī had definitely repented. Although the personal enmity between Sultan Fu'ād and Fathī continued, the problem was solved by Fathī's acceptance of a leave of absence. Following this, Fathī resigned and was replaced by Aḥmad Pasha Ziwar, a pro-British notable<sup>108</sup>. Wingate congratulated Brunyate

105 Graham minute to Wingate's letter of December 9, 1917, FO371/2926.

106 Foreign Office to Wingate, December 13, 1917, FO141/629.

107 Wingate to Hardinge, December 13, 1917, SA166/3/2, HP, Vol. VI(35), 1917.

108 Aḥmad Ziwar was Advocate-General of the Native Courts; he held a variety of Ministerial posts after 1917.

and Cheetham, who had played no little role in securing a settlement acceptable to all those concerned. After Ziwar's appointment, Wingate hoped that the matter was closed.

Let us hope that - for the moment at any rate - we shall have no more advanced political programmes, though we must expect a very frank exposé of National aspirations when the war is over and the settlement has to be made on several pending questions. By that time, however, I hope that the deliberations of the Capitulations Commission will have considerably cleared the atmosphere and that decisions on debatable points will be facilitated. 109

Thus Wingate came to believe that Rushdī's programme had been an attempt to conciliate the Nationalists who had been gaining adherents to 're-open the Legislative Assembly on the return of peace',<sup>110</sup>. Wingate felt that, since there were few qualified Egyptians for ministerial posts, those capable Nationalist leaders were in favourable positions to gain support and power. Graham replied that there were more qualified Egyptians than during Cromer's regime<sup>111</sup>.

Ironically, at the very time Wingate was becoming more intransigent against the Nationalists, the officials in the Foreign Office were having second thoughts regarding the wisdom of leaving Zaghlūl in the political wilderness. For this reason, the Foreign Office wired Wingate that it had no objection to the inclusion of Zaghlūl in the Cabinet if he was recommended. The Foreign

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109 Wingate to Hardinge, December 24, 1917, FO141/629, FO371/3199.

110 Wingate to Balfour, December 27, 1917, FO371/3199.

111 Graham minute on Wingate letter of December 27, 1917, FO371/3199.

Office did, however, maintain that the Sultan had no right to change ministers without the consent of the British government<sup>112</sup>. Leading British officials in Cairo, particularly Cheetham and Brunyate, were not willing to recommend Zaghlūl, nor was Wingate willing to accept the responsibility for Zaghlūl's appointment in the face of their opposition. While British officials worried lest Zaghlūl, once in the Cabinet, oppose the ready acceptance of all British policies, they also recognised that he was potentially dangerous as long as he remained outside the governing circles.

During the spring of 1918, murmurings of nationalist discontent continued. Since the key Nationalist leaders were outside the government, it was hard for British officials to exercise pressure, other than arrest or exile, to persuade them to desist. Even Fu'ād was suspected by British officials of listening to Nationalist grievances and of sympathising with them<sup>113</sup>. Thus, the embryo of nationalist support among Egyptian politicians had been apparent a full year before the Armistice. The strength the nationalist movement assumed in 1919 was largely dependent upon the amount of support it gained from the fallāh (fallāhin) and the educated classes<sup>114</sup>, many of whom had been alienated or angered by wartime demands. These grievances made themselves known immediately following the Armistice.

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112 Foreign Office to Wingate, December 29, 1917, FO371/3199.

113 Wingate to Montagu, May 1, 1918, SA168/3.

114 Osmond Walrond to Milner, October 22, 1918, MP164.

## CHAPTER V

### BRITISH CIVIL SERVANTS IN EGYPT AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE

After Kitchener, who had been the undisputed master of the government, left Egypt, Edward Cecil, Ronald Graham, and Milne Cheetham began to compete for the supremacy of their respective departments. When McMahon made no attempt to reassert absolute control after his appointment as High Commissioner, the rivalry among these men continued<sup>1</sup>. McMahon's self effacement was caused, at least partially, by his lack of experience in Egyptian affairs and his inability to speak either Arabic or French. Although Graham returned to London in September 1916, competition between Cecil and Cheetham persisted, while Brunyate was drawn gradually into the affair. When Wingate arrived in Cairo in December, his chief responsibility was to bring order to the somewhat confused British administration in Egypt, and to provide the type of leadership which would eliminate personal rivalries. This task was complicated by the demands placed upon Egyptian resources owing to the war and by the large number of British officials and military men in Egypt at the time.

Indeed, since the British occupation in 1882, the number of British officials in Egypt had steadily increased. In 1882, Cromer's staff numbered

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1 Above, Chapter II, p. 31.

about 300 to 400, with Europeans holding about two percent of the positions and receiving 16 percent of the salaries. Owing to the extra work caused by the War, no records of the number of British officials in Egypt were kept during Wingate's tenure<sup>2</sup>, but during the Milner Mission (December 1919 to March 1920), Egyptians only held about 23 to 28 percent of the higher administrative positions. This meant that British officials in these positions had increased to about 42 to 59 percent<sup>3</sup>. In spite of the increase in British officials, there are corresponding evidences that the quality of the men - in terms of experience and knowledge - did not rise proportionately. During the War, the younger and more capable men enlisted, leaving only those men who were thought to be incapable of wartime duty or those too valuable to be expended in Egypt

- 2 The Foreign Office received a question to be asked in Parliament concerning the number of officials in Egypt, but no one could supply the answer. March 8, 1916. Grey reported that it was not necessary to count the officials until after the War. Grey to McMahon, August 2, 1916, FO371/2667. Figures on Cromer's staff are found in T.A. Spender, 'The Egyptian Problem', Quarterly Review (April, 1922). They are also in Elgood, p.63.
- 3 Milner Mission Report, FO840/19. In 1920, there were 21,193 Egyptians working in the government. This was 86% of the total. Their salaries equalled £E 2,740,245, or 71% of the total. There were 1,546 British officials, comprising 6% of the officials, and receiving £E 732,273, or 19% of the salaries. Other nationalities held 1,812 jobs, or 8% of the total. They received £E 377,066, or 10% of the salaries. In the salary range of £E 1,500, -2,999 (the highest level) there were eight Egyptian and 34 British officials. These figures are exclusive of the seven Egyptian ministers, the Sultan, and members of the Legislative Assembly. In the salary range of £E 240 and below, there were 19,061 Egyptian and 363 British officials. Also see Morroe Berger, Bureaucracy and society in modern Egypt: a study of the higher civil servant (Princeton, 1957), p.31.



to carry on the administrative work.

Clayton noted that the British civil service in Egypt was remarkable only for its lack of spirit and its inefficiency<sup>4</sup>, while Milner remarked that officials in Egypt and London were often 'mediocre'<sup>5</sup>. These facts were repeated many times in the course of interviews given by members of the Milner Mission<sup>6</sup>. British officials were criticised both for their ignorance of Egypt and for their isolation from Egyptian society. The officials tended to live clustered together in areas like Gizira where the inhabitants were predominantly European. Social life centred around the Sporting Club or the Turf Club. Egyptians belonged to the Muḥammad 'Alī Club, and Coptic Egyptians gathered in the Ramses Club<sup>7</sup>. Thus, British officials came into contact with Egyptians only on an official level; even then they most frequently met as superior officials to subordinates. British society was, therefore, practically a closed one. Although British authorities did not purposely seek to offend

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4 Clayton to Wingate, August 3, 1916, SA139/1.

5 Milner Notes, 1917-1921, MP 246

6 See the Milner Papers and the ones on file at the PRO, FO840.

7 For descriptions of the life led by the British in Egypt see: Edward Cecil, The leisure of an Egyptian official (London, 1921); Priscilla Napier, (daughter of William Hayter in the Legal Department), A late beginner (London, 1966); Murray Harris, Egypt under the Egyptians (London, 1925); Lord Vansittart, The mist procession (London, 1958); Sydney Moseley, With Kitchener in Cairo (London, 1917). B.G. Gaulis, Le nationalisme Egyptien (Nancy, 1928) gives a good picture of the Egyptian social clubs. Storrs, p.93, mentions the isolation of British officials and their lack of experience as contributing factors to the 1919 riots.

Egyptians, the insular nature of their society remained visible evidence of a foreign occupying force. Wingate not only had to unify his own staff, but also to act as a liaison between high ranking Egyptians and British officials. Nor did the officials in Cairo alleviate these problems for Wingate.

Before coming to Egypt, Wingate had depended upon Clayton for information and analysis of the situation<sup>8</sup>, but once in Cairo, Wingate preferred to control matters himself with the aid of the officers who accompanied him from the Sudan. According to the organisation of the Residency staff, the High Commissioner was assisted by a private secretary, an assistant secretary, an A.D.C., three assistant A.D.C.'s, a counsellor, and the Chancery, which was staffed with assorted clerks. The Oriental Secretary and Arab Bureau also furnished the High Commissioner with information and advice<sup>9</sup>. Although the Counsellor and other Residency officials remained after Wingate's appointment, his officers from the Sudan, Symes, Keown-Boyd, and Patterson, took over the positions close to the High Commissioner. Haines remained as Adviser to the Ministry of Interior, although his capabilities were questioned. He was reportedly unable to reach a rapport with Egyptians with whom he came into constant contact<sup>10</sup>. Brunyate, too, while possessing a tremendous capacity

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8 Wingate to Clayton, February 29, 1916, SA470.

9 Recommendation of Sub-Committee for the Organisation of the Residency, Milner Mission, 1919-1920, MP164.

10 Storrs wrote about Haines: 'Knowledge will not make up for absence of personality'. Civil Service Note, January 31, 1917, Storrs Papers, II/4. Walrond reported that Haines used to interview mudirs and other Egyptians, many of whom traditionally disliked dogs, with a fox terrier sitting on his armchair. Walrond to Milner, December 9, 1918, MP164.

for work, as evidenced by the number of committees of which he was chairman, frequently clashed with Egyptians because of his stubborn attitude and tactlessness<sup>11</sup>. Because there were no alternatives to Brunyate or Haines, Wingate was forced to rely upon their assistance and advice. While Wingate also came to depend upon Cheetham, he indicated his willingness to have him transferred<sup>12</sup>.

Soon after his appointment, Wingate had Storrs, the Oriental Secretary, appointed Assistant Political Officer to the Anglo-French Political Mission (A.P.O.) and replaced him with Symes. This appointment prompted Stack, acting Governor General in the Sudan, to ask if Wingate wanted to make the transfers of Symes and Keown-Boyd permanent ones in lieu of the temporary ones which they had been granted<sup>13</sup>. That Wingate seemed to favour his protégés from the Sudan caused Anglo-Egyptian officials to grumble. Wingate had not been in office long before complaints about his treatment of other officials began. He was also criticised for his slowness and inability to make firm decisions<sup>14</sup>.

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11 Rennell Rodd, Note on Appointments in Egypt, March 14, 1920, wrote on Brunyate: 'His tact, however, in dealing with other men was conspicuously incommensurate with his ambition and he failed by attempting too much'. Walrond mentions the same characteristic in a letter to Milner, November 26, 1919, MP164. Stewart Symes, Tour of duty (London, 1946), p.26.

12 Wingate to Hardinge, December 27, 1917. Hardinge to Wingate, January 23, 1918, HP, Vol. I (36), 1918.

13 Stack to Clayton, April 22, 1917, SA470/6.

14 Herbert diary, February 3, 1917, July 9, 1917, July 23, 1917, August 29, 1917, PPC.

While leaving most of the older British officials in their posts, Wingate did take steps to remove one official whose presence he considered detrimental to the smooth running organisation he hoped to build. This man was Edward Cecil, the Financial Adviser and brother of Robert Cecil, Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1918) and Minister of the Blockade (1916-1918). Edward Cecil was perhaps the most powerful official in Egypt. Being well aware of this fact, Wingate was determined to eliminate his influence. Wingate realised that the most successful British administrators in Egypt had ruled absolutely, but, in his attempt to remove Cecil, Wingate may have clashed unnecessarily with politicians in Great Britain, many of whom were closely connected with the Cecil family<sup>15</sup>.

Indeed, this factor becomes more crucial in the light of the government changes in London in December 1916. Wingate was appointed by Grey with Asquith's concurrence. When Asquith's government fell in December, it was replaced by a smaller Cabinet led by Lloyd George as Prime Minister. Whereas Wingate had been well known to members of Asquith's government, he had only a passing acquaintance with Lloyd George or Lord Curzon who became President of Council<sup>16</sup>. Lloyd George had had nothing to do with Wingate's

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15 The Cecils were related to A.J. Balfour and were close friends of Milner who was later to marry Lord Edward Cecil's widow.

16 Wingate and Lloyd George met several times, once at Balmoral. Following this meeting, Lloyd George used Wingate's analogy of two small rivers flowing together to make the Nile in a speech at Colwyn Bay in September 1910, North Wales World News, September 23, 1910, Lloyd George Papers, C34/2-9. He referred to Wingate's good work in the Sudan in a speech at the Mansion House, July 1914, Daily Telegraph, July 18, 1914, Lloyd George Papers, C36/2/27.

appointment, and had only been cursorily informed of it by Grey<sup>17</sup>. With Lloyd George as Prime Minister, the War Cabinet became a more important factor in determining policy. The change of government occurred, because Lloyd George and his supporters were convinced Asquith could not win the War quickly. Lloyd George promised to place the entire resources of the nation on a war footing, and to win the War as quickly as possible. To accomplish these aims, he made it clear that most governmental power would be vested in the War Cabinet and himself<sup>18</sup>. Although the Foreign Office remained in charge of the execution of policy, decisions of consequence were made by Lloyd George and the War Cabinet. Such decisions were frequently reached beforehand in the Prime Minister's private conversations. Thus those individuals close to Lloyd George were in excellent positions to gain his attention and support. If Wingate was aware of the changing political structure, vis-à-vis the importance of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister, he did not attempt to augment his influence with Lloyd George or Curzon, but continued to report solely to Hardinge and Graham. Since these men were not close to

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17 Grey to Lloyd George, November 2, 1916, Lloyd George Papers, 2/13/12.

18 The War Cabinet was composed of: Lloyd George, Prime Minister; Lord Curzon, President of Council; Mr. Henderson and Lord Milner, Ministers without Portfolio; Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer; and A.J. Balfour as Secretary for Foreign Affairs. For more on the increased power of this Cabinet see: Thornton diary (Thornton was Milner's private secretary at this time), MP299; and John P. Mackintosh, The British Cabinet (London, 1962), pp.350-375.

the focus of power around Lloyd George, and Graham had been demonstrated to have had ambitions of his own in Egypt<sup>19</sup>, Wingate might have done well to make his views personally known to Lloyd George or to those men close to him. That Wingate was ultimately unable to obtain Cecil's dismissal from Egypt was in some measure caused by his remoteness from politics and lack of influence in prominent circles within London.

Wingate was encouraged by Hardinge and Graham to ask for Cecil's removal from Egypt. Indeed, Wingate had barely established himself in the Residency before he received letters from Graham telling him that the entire Egyptian administration, particularly the Financial Department, badly needed reform<sup>20</sup>. In complete agreement with Graham, Wingate told Hardinge that Cecil possessed too much power among the other administrators, and that his influence overshadowed that of the High Commissioner, who should have been the predominant figure<sup>21</sup>. To support his contention, Wingate referred to Cheetham's memorandum to the Residency which outlined the proper roles for each Egyptian department. In this memorandum Cheetham emphasised the importance of the Chancery which was to act as a clearing house for all information being relayed to the High Commissioner from Egyptian administrative departments<sup>22</sup>. Owing to the power he could exercise as Financial Adviser, Cecil

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19 Above, Chapter II, p. 37

20 Graham to Wingate, January 3, 1917, No.162, Wingate Dossier to the Milner Mission, MP 162.

21 Wingate to Hardinge, January 21, 1917, SA175/4.

22 Cheetham memorandum to the Residency, n.d. (circa December 1916), SA151/11. Above, Chapter II, p. 22.

had been able to encourage Egyptian and British officials to report directly to him. He thereby assumed authority which had formerly rested with the High Commissioner. Wingate was quick to see that as long as Cecil remained it would be difficult for the High Commissioner to assume full authority. Therefore, only a month after becoming High Commissioner, Wingate recommended the removal of Cecil from his position because he was blocking the effective reorganisation of the Egyptian administration.

I am very hopeful that the changes here and Cheetham's re-instatement in the position from which my predecessor moved him and to which he has now returned will lead to a great improvement in many directions, though it must necessarily take some time for the effect to be fully felt ....

I am simply astonished at the extent to which Cecil has not only established a sort of ascendancy over the other Advisers but used his position at the head of the finances to make the rank and file of officials, British and Egyptian, look to him ... I am convinced that the strings must be drawn together again into the hands of the High Commissioner. 23

To enable the High Commissioner to integrate the administration, Wingate asked that the Foreign Office accept Cecil's request to enlist. Cecil first requested such permission after the War began, but he was consistently refused on the grounds that he could not be spared from Cairo<sup>24</sup>. Thus, Wingate's recommendation incited considerable discussion among Foreign Office officials. Opinion was divided between the Balfour-Cecil contingent and the Hardinge-

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23 Wingate to Hardinge, January 31, 1917, SA163/1.

24 Cecil to Wingate, January 16, 1917. Cecil applied for a transfer in January 1915, September 1915, and in the fall of 1916. McMahon to Cecil, September 19, 1916, wrote that Cecil could not be spared. SA160/2.

Graham group over whether Wingate's request would be accepted<sup>25</sup>. In this case, the decision appears to have been made not so much upon Wingate's analysis as upon personal interests<sup>26</sup>. After receiving Wingate's recommendation, Hardinge showed it to Balfour. Hardinge was convinced that Balfour would act impartially and not consider family interests<sup>27</sup>. Other officials were not so certain. Mervyn Herbert, for one, feared that Wingate had miscalculated, and that his request would not weigh heavily with Balfour<sup>28</sup>. While the matter was being considered, Cecil returned to London.

With Cecil's departure, Wingate attempted to take over full control of the government, but was not completely successful in this endeavour. In Cecil's absence, Ronald Lindsey, former Assistant Adviser to the Financial Department, became acting Adviser. As a close personal friend of Cecil, he continued his financial policies and also informed him of all activities in Egypt. Other British officials who were uncertain whether Cecil would return or not were reluctant to look solely to Wingate for direction. Nor was Wingate strong enough to force the British or Egyptian officials to accept his leadership. Consequently, they soon began to doubt Wingate's wisdom in acting so hastily against Cecil. Stack wrote:

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25 Graham to Wingate, February 7, 1917, SA163/2.

26 Ibid. Graham believed Balfour and Robert Cecil were primarily worried over Edward Cecil's future.

27 Hardinge to Wingate, February 14, 1917, SA167/2/2; HP, Vol. 1(29), 1917.

28 Herbert diary, n.d. PPC.

29 Cecil to Wingate, May 16, 1917, SA164/5. Herbert diary, August, 1917, PPC.



It seems to me in view of the growing power of the Ministers that Master Stack's name for Wingate was very ill judged to get rid of Cecil. I fancy he was the only adviser who could stand up to them. 30

Meanwhile, Cecil was not altogether idle in London. He visited Hardinge on March 7 to stress that he intended to return to Egypt. Hardinge told him that his leave had been granted for unspecified military duties lasting four to five months, but after that time the matter would have to be settled. Hardinge reported this encounter to Wingate, who had received similar information from Cecil himself<sup>31</sup>. In his letter to Wingate, Cecil warned him that there was a movement among some leading British officials in London to reorganise the administration of all Middle East departments in the Foreign Office under a single heading. Cecil wrote that he had been consulted concerning the proposal, but had not expressed an opinion, because he did not know Wingate's views. In addition, Cecil reported that his brother thought that the Foreign Office should not direct Middle East affairs, but that, as part of a general Imperial change, these affairs should be placed under a separate department<sup>32</sup>.

Robert Cecil's programme placed the administration of Egypt under the direction of the Colonial Office. Hardinge opposed the suggestion on the grounds that it implied the annexation of Egypt, which had been rejected lest it should cause untoward trouble in Egypt. Although Hardinge did not think that the

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30 Stack to Clayton, July 15, 1917, SA470/6.

31 Hardinge to Wingate, March 8, 1917, SA153/8.

32 Cecil to Wingate, March 19, 1917, SA164/3.

Protectorate would end after the War, he believed that Egypt was further advanced towards constitutional government than India. Therefore, according to Hardinge, it was not suitable for Egyptian administration to be directed by the Colonial Office. As further justification of his position, Hardinge pointed out that after an independent Arabia was established the Foreign Office could work through the Egyptian administration in order to mediate between the Arabs and the French in Syria<sup>33</sup>. In other words, Hardinge foresaw Egypt becoming the centre from which information on the Middle East would be received and transmitted.

On the other hand, Cecil maintained that the duties of the Foreign Office were diplomatic in nature while the government of Egypt was essentially administrative<sup>34</sup>. Cecil refuted Graham who contended that the basic administrative structure in Egypt was good, although certain departments needed to be changed. He seized upon Graham's admission that some reform was needed as evidence that the entire system was faulty<sup>35</sup>. According to Cecil, placing Egyptian administration under the Colonial Office would not raise the annexation issue, but would, rather, regulate Great Britain's control over Egypt<sup>36</sup>. In his rebuttal, Hardinge wrote that placing Egyptian administration

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33 Hardinge minute to Balfour, March 16, 1917, FO407/183.

34 Robert Cecil minute, March 17, 1917, FO407/183.

35 Graham memorandum on Egypt, March 2, 1917, FO407/183.

36 Cecil minute, n.d. FO407/183.

under the Colonial Office or the India Office would be a definite change for the worse<sup>37</sup>.

Wingate did not submit a memorandum on the subject, nor was he officially consulted. He did write privately to Graham, on April 6, 1917, that if the Foreign Office were to continue to administer the Egyptian government, it needed to create an adequate department staffed by qualified personnel<sup>38</sup>. Along the same lines, Wingate agreed with Hardinge concerning the development of Cairo as the British focal point of control for outside the Nile Valley<sup>39</sup>. Wingate told Hardinge that he hoped he had the confidence of the government, and that the discussion of administrative changes had not arisen because of any actions he might or might not have taken. Hardinge replied that the problems of Egyptian administration could wait for solution until the Armistice. He reported to Wingate that the government placed every confidence in his abilities as High Commissioner<sup>40</sup>.

Wingate evidently accepted Hardinge's reassurance, because he did not attempt to inform other Cabinet members of his views concerning Egyptian administration. He did, however, ask to be informed as to what policies they intended to pursue in Egypt. Wingate bluntly asked:

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37 Hardinge minute, n.d. FO407/183.

38 Wingate to Graham, April 6, 1917, SA164/4.

39 Wingate to Hardinge, April 17, 1917, SA164/4.

40 Hardinge to Wingate, April 19, 1917, SA237/10.

.... what the views of H.M.G. are with regard to the surrender to the native administration of some of the higher posts now held by British. The matter is a vitally important one for the future of this country and it would be very helpful to me to know in greater detail the views of H.M.G. on the policy to be pursued in this respect when the war is over. 41

Wingate's query had been prompted by a memorandum written by Rushdī Pasha. Rushdī complained that Great Britain had taken control of the foreign affairs of Egypt after declaring the Protectorate and had left merely the ineffectual shell of the Egyptian Ministry for Foreign Affairs under Negīb Pasha Ghālī. Rushdī complained of this development and asked for more Egyptian participation in their own foreign affairs. Rushdī's memorandum was obviously an attempt to secure more self-government for Egyptians after the War<sup>42</sup>. Wingate favoured giving the Egyptians a greater semblance of autonomy, but advised against letting them have any part in foreign affairs, even those in which Egypt was vitally concerned<sup>43</sup>. Although Wingate did not expect the Foreign Office to begin changes during the War, he wanted to know what the policies were, so that he could deal effectively with Egyptian attempts

41 Wingate to Graham, May 28, 1917, SA237/10.

42 Rushdī memorandum. Sent by Wingate to Hardinge, May 29, 1917, HP, Vol. IV(32), 1917. It was seen by Cecil and Graham. Robert Hyde Greg, formerly in the British Agency, Cairo, was in charge of the Egyptian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1917-1921.

43 Wingate to Hardinge, May 29, 1917, HP, Vol. IV(32), 1917. Edward Cecil advocated giving the Egyptians more self-government. He wrote concerning the matter after hearing the exiled Egyptian nationalists in Switzerland planned to present similar claims. Cecil to Wingate, May 16, 1917, SA164/5.

like Rushdī's memorandum, to gain more autonomy. Unfortunately, the question was not considered by the Foreign Office during the summer. All programmes concerning Egyptian administration and policy were deferred until autumn.

In the interim, the demands upon Egypt increased, and the relationships among Anglo-Egyptian officials worsened. Clayton, whose opinions Wingate valued, became Chief Political Officer for the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. This position took him out of Cairo and placed him in closer contact with General Allenby, who in the future was to appoint Clayton as Adviser to the Ministry of Interior in Egypt. In Clayton's absence, Wingate depended more and more upon his protégés from the Sudan and a few of the older British officials. He did not, however, desist from attempting to remove Cecil from Egypt. On May 16, Wingate wrote Hardinge that he thought Cecil should remain in England for the duration of the War<sup>44</sup>. Balfour considered the suggestion at length. Finally, on July 18, 1917, Balfour replied that he regretted there had been difficulties between Wingate and Cecil, but that Egypt required the best men available. For this reason, Balfour decided that Cecil should return to Cairo<sup>45</sup>. Wingate accepted the dictum gracefully, although he continued to affirm that adjustments would be necessary after the War. He noted that until the time came he would attempt to avoid direct clashes with Cecil<sup>46</sup>. Where Wingate had lost his battle to remove Cecil from Egypt,

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44 Wingate to Hardinge, May 16, 1917, SA164/5.

45 Balfour to Wingate, July 18, 1917, Wingate Dossier to Milner, MP162.

46 Wingate to Balfour, August 15, 1917, Wingate Dossier to Milner, MP162.

Cecil not only thwarted Wingate, but had had the opportunity to present his complaints and ideas in person to the officials in London. In doing what he thought best, Wingate actually gave Cecil an opportunity to strengthen his own position.

Wingate's attempt to have Cecil dismissed caused hard feelings among his colleagues in Egypt. Instead of healing old rivalries, the attempt to remove Cecil merely accentuated them<sup>47</sup>. Lindsey's resignation from the department of Finance is one example of the type of disagreement which arose in Cecil's absence. Thinking Wingate meant to introduce programmes necessitating heavy capital output, Lindsey handed in his resignation. Like Cecil, Lindsey opposed such projects lest they place undue strain upon the Egyptian budget which was committed to expensive programmes after the War: these included road construction, irrigation improvements, and public buildings. After Lindsey told Cecil of the proposals, Cecil complained to Wingate<sup>48</sup>. Wingate replied that he had no intentions of initiating new projects until after the War<sup>49</sup>. Not placated by this announcement, Lindsey persisted in resigning, even though the Foreign Office, Cecil, and Wingate urged him to reconsider. Lindsey replied

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47 Stack to Clayton, July 15, 1917. 'I hear the H.C. has a tough job in front of him in Egypt unless he changes considerably; his methods are not the ones likely to succeed in getting it straightened out'. SA470/6.

48 Cecil to Wingate, May 16, 1917, SA164/5.

49 Wingate to Cecil, June 16, 1917, SA164/8. Lindsey file, HP, Vol. VI(34), 1917; SA165/1.

he was leaving owing to a conflict on financial policy<sup>50</sup>. Wingate immediately asked Lindsey to explain his statement. In a letter to Hardinge, Wingate wrote that he favoured appointing a committee which would create limits on spending for each governmental department. Such a committee would eliminate the necessity for the High Commissioner to decide whether or not a given department would receive the funds it requested<sup>51</sup>. Cecil and Lindsey both disagreed with Wingate, because they wanted the Financial Department to have complete independence in deciding such matters<sup>52</sup>. After an interchange of letters between Wingate and Lindsey, and a private interview in which Wingate tactfully apologised for any remarks which Lindsey might have taken personally, Lindsey was persuaded to remain until Cecil returned<sup>53</sup>. This incident indicates the type of disagreements which arose among the British officials. It also typifies the problems which arose when Wingate attempted to outline programmes or changes for the future.

While Wingate tried to cope with the administrative difficulties in Cairo, Robert Cecil submitted a memorandum, 'Future Egyptian Administration', written by his brother, to the Cabinet on September 14, 1917. As the title indicates, this memorandum formulated a new organisation for Egyptian administration. It advocated the creation of a department which would combine the work of the existing Egyptian departments and the Arab Bureau. Cecil

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50 Lindsey to Wingate, August 26, 1917, HP, Vol. VI(34), 1917.

51 Wingate to Hardinge, August 29, 1917, HP, Vol. VI(34), 1917.

52 Lindsey File, SA165/3/1.

53 Ibid.

urged that a special committee be formed to consider the memorandum<sup>54</sup>.

The Cabinet acquiesced, and the committee was created. Members of this committee included: A.J. Balfour as chairman, Curzon, Milner, and Ronald Storrs as secretary<sup>55</sup>. The Special Committee to study the Egyptian administration met on September 24, 26, 27, and October 1 to hear the evidence given by Edward Cecil, Ronald Graham, McMahon, and Cheetham. In brief, the committee was to decide if the Egyptian administration was to remain under the direction of the Foreign Office or was to be transferred to the Colonial Office or another governmental department. Cecil urged this decision be made before the situation in Egypt became 'acute'<sup>56</sup> and rendered change impossible.

As on previous occasions, officials in the Foreign Office were alarmed by the idea that the Egyptian administration should be removed from their tutelage. Before Cecil had even submitted the memorandum recommending changes, Hardinge wrote to Wingate that the Cecil brothers were intriguing against the Foreign Office. To halt the Cecil manoeuvres, Graham, with Hardinge's support, began a campaign against any proposal to eliminate Foreign Office control over Egypt. Hardinge felt that if officials would concentrate on winning the War,

54 War Cabinet, CAB23/4, No.233, September 14, 1917.

55 CAB27/12. Report by Lord Curzon, G.162. Storrs was invited to become secretary by A.J. Balfour, September 20, 1917, Storrs Papers, II/4.

56 Cecil to Curzon, September 28, 1917, CAB27/12.



instead of starting these hare-brain schemes, it would save a lot of time and trouble and probably be more to the advantage of their own interests, but unfortunately there are people who love to undermine situations that are progressing satisfactorily. 57

Hardinge termed Cecil's memorandum as 'pernicious',<sup>58</sup>. Aiming to prevent the acceptance of the memorandum, Graham wrote a rebuttal in which he argued that to create a new department would involve duplicating records, and, in short, make unnecessary work<sup>59</sup>. He thought splitting the Egyptian administration from the Foreign Office would place the High Commissioner in an anomalous position vis-à-vis the advisers and the Egyptian officials. Although he was willing to admit the system was far from perfect, Graham wanted to delay changes until the War ended.

Our future relations with the native population of Egypt will, in my belief, depend very greatly on the manner in which the inevitable problems are tackled at the end of the war and the personal relations which can be established with the Sultan, Ministers and leading Egyptian notables. 60

Cecil did not disagree with Graham on the point that there would be turbulence in Egypt after the War. Indeed, he fully expected it to develop. This was the reason he felt it incumbent that the means for dealing with Egyptian unrest should be provided before it occurred. Milner, too, upheld Cecil on this point. He wrote:

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57 Hardinge to Wingate, September 7, 1917, SA236/7.

58 Hardinge to Wingate, September 26, 1917, SA165/3/2.

59 Graham memorandum on Egyptian Administration, September 28, 1917, CAB27/12.

60 Ibid.

.... the internal problems of Egypt are bound in the near future to force themselves upon the attention of the Government and Parliament of this country, in a degree of which we have had no experience in the past ... Unless we lose the war, Egypt will in the future be as much a part of the British Empire as India or Nigeria. 61

Both Curzon and Graham disputed Milner's prophecy. They were supported by Cheetham whose primary objective was to assure that the power of the High Commissioner was not weakened. When Cheetham raised the issue of the Residency, Curzon asked about Wingate's opinions. Since he had not been consulted, no one at the committee meetings could answer. Nor had Wingate sent the Foreign Office or the Cabinet any communications outlining his ideas.

Reverting to the problem of future trouble in Egypt, Balfour asked for Graham's opinion. Graham replied that trouble was unlikely as long as Turkey remained weak<sup>62</sup>. Balfour was anxious that the government be prepared to deal with any Egyptian demands for further autonomy, but accepted Graham's contention that separating the Foreign Office from the Egyptian administration would not solve the problem. In the end, the committee failed to adopt a resolution. By delaying a decision over what form the administration of Egypt was to take, Hardinge and Graham believed they had defeated Cecil's proposals.

61 Milner memorandum on Egyptian administration, October 31, 1917, CAB27/12. The minutes of the meeting at which these memoranda were discussed are found in CAB27/12. The following summary of the major points raised at these meetings is taken from those minutes.

62 Minutes, September 27, 1917, CAB27/12.

Both of them reported to Wingate concerning the meetings and their success, but warned him that Edward Cecil was likely to raise the subject after he returned to Cairo. They expected Cecil to advise Wingate to recommend that a High Commissioner for Egypt be stationed in London acting like the High Commissioners for New Zealand or Australia<sup>63</sup>. Cheetham told Wingate that he was combatting all the Cecil proposals, but that there was

an ignorance of Egyptian affairs which is disconcerting  
and ... offers great opportunities for intrigue. 64

Hardinge wrote that Wingate need have no fear concerning Cecil's report for the Foreign Office remained loyal to their own men. He emphasised that if the matter were reopened there was a 'strong prima facie ground in support of the contentions of the Foreign Office'<sup>65</sup>. These letters indicated that Hardinge and Graham expected Lord Edward to raise the question when he arrived in Egypt. Nor did they believe that the matter was finally closed in London. Yet Wingate accepted Hardinge's pledge of good will, and made no effort to present his views personally to the Cabinet.

Edward Cecil returned to his position as Adviser to the Ministry of Finance in early October. Immediately after his return, he had an interview with Wingate. Wingate asked Cecil, who had not consulted him before writing the memorandum on the Egyptian administration, if the reports of the committee

63 Graham to Wingate, October 14, 1917; October 12, 1917, SA166/1/1.

64 Cheetham to Wingate, September 29, 1917, SA165/3/2.

65 Hardinge to Wingate, November 9, 1917, SA166/2.

meetings had been submitted for the High Commissioner to see. Cecil doubted that any dossier on the subject would be sent to Egypt. Wingate interpreted this as a sign that the scheme had been finally rejected. Wingate appears to have objected, not so much to Cecil's reorganisation scheme, as to the manner in which Cecil had chosen to present the idea to the Cabinet. Wingate wrote to Hardinge:

I need hardly say that I entirely share your views as to the impropriety of a subordinate in an Administration starting these hares over the head of his Chief, and this alone should condemn the scheme, apart from any possible intrinsic value it may have but, on the other hand, I fully realise the exceptional difficulties of the existing situation. 66

That Cecil submitted the programme without previous consultation indicates the extent of the division between the High Commissioner and the advisers, and, further, how ineffectual Wingate had been in repairing the split.

Following this 'preliminary skirmish',<sup>67</sup> between Wingate and Cecil, it became obvious that Cecil was too ill to continue his work. Cecil's condition rapidly deteriorated, and he left Egypt for Switzerland in December 1917. He died of tuberculosis only a year later. After Cecil's departure, the Foreign Office was forced to find a suitable replacement. Lindsey had taken his leave; in the absence of qualified personnel, Brunyate was appointed temporary

66 Wingate to Hardinge, October 20, 1917, SA166/3/1.

67 Wingate to Hardinge, November 29, 1917, HP, Vol. VII(35), 1917. Wingate regretted Cecil's illness, but was glad to be relieved of the burden of keeping him as a subordinate. Hardinge showed this letter to Graham.

Financial Adviser. The Foreign Office was well aware of Brunyate's shortcomings and was not satisfied with the arrangement, but could think of no alternative<sup>68</sup>. By 1918, Brunyate was asking to be appointed as permanent Financial Adviser. Wingate suggested that the permanent appointment should be delayed until the Armistice, when a commission could come to Egypt in order to review the entire Egyptian system and make recommendations based upon their firsthand study. This was the first suggestion that a formal survey of the Egyptian administration be made following the War. Although the idea was not implemented at the time it was suggested, it was to be raised again at a later date. Wingate did not want Brunyate's appointment finalised, because he considered that new appointments would depend largely upon the policy for Egypt adopted by Great Britain.

If the tendency is towards greater powers of self-government for the Egyptians and a gradual relaxation of the purely British grip, then probably the best policy will be to make the financial government stronger than ever - to endeavour to maintain British prestige and authority by such means - in that event, a man of BRUNYATE's calibre, training and experience would probably best serve the purpose.

If ... the after-war policy is to maintain the status quo and to gradually acquire a firmer, but at the same time sympathetic attitude towards native aspirations and introduce into the country a more normal form of government and Administration than exists at present, then the

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68 Wingate to Foreign Office, No. 1235, November 20, 1917. Clark minute: 'this /Brunyate's appointment/ is unfortunate, but no doubt is the only thing to do.' Graham supported Brunyate's claims. FO371/2926. Edward Cecil to Milner, January 24, 1918, wrote that Brunyate was capable. MP145.

adoption of the second alternative appointment of a purely financial expert would, I think, lead more quickly to the desired result. 69

As he was ignorant of the policy to be accepted, Wingate did not express his opinions further. He granted Brunyate's claims to the position, but noted that in important matters personal considerations had to be overlooked<sup>70</sup>. In the Foreign Office, Eyre Crowe<sup>71</sup> opposed Brunyate, because the position demanded a man with more technical economic knowledge than Brunyate possessed<sup>72</sup>. The appointment was not settled until February 1919, when Sir Richard Crawford was appointed Financial Adviser on Wingate's recommendation<sup>72</sup>.

Before Cecil left Egypt, Montagu<sup>74</sup>, who had never been to Egypt but who was familiar with India, paid a short visit to Wingate and other high officials in Cairo. Reports of this visit were sent back to Lloyd George and were officially submitted to the Cabinet in the form of an extensive memorandum on the Egyptian situation<sup>75</sup>. It is noteworthy that Montagu's visit directly followed

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- 69 Wingate to Hardinge, June 30, 1918, SA237/10.
- 70 Wingate to Hardinge, September 29, 1918, SA237/10.
- 71 Sir Eyre Crowe was assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1912-1919, Minister Plenipotentiary 1919.
- 72 Crowe minute on Wingate letter to Hardinge, September 29, 1918, HP, Vol. IV(39), 1918.
- 73 Foreign Office to Cheetham, February 20, 1919, SA237/10; FO371/3723. Sir Richard Crawford had been adviser to Turkish Ministry of Finance 1911-1914. He was subsequently taken ill and replaced by Paul Harvey.
- 74 Rt. Hon. Edwin Samuel Montagu, Secretary of State for India 1917; Financial Secretary to the Treasury, 1914-1916; Minister of Munitions and Member of the War Committee, 1916.
- 75 Montagu to Lloyd George, October 27, 1917, Lloyd George Papers, F40/1/1. Montagu to War Cabinet, November 4, 1917, CAB24/34, G.T. series 2837.

the accession of Aḥmad Fu'ād as Sultan and the debates on Egyptian administration. Doubtless, Montagu's timely tour was in some measure aimed at gauging the effectiveness of the Egyptian government under Wingate. Montagu was favourably impressed by what he saw in Egypt and with Wingate.

Let me say that I formed a good opinion of Reginald Wingate, I hope not prejudiced by the most considerate hospitality and patient discussion of the matters I asked him about. He is not perhaps a very clever man. His great knowledge of this part of the world and his character and manner have given him, so far as I can judge, a striking hold over the respect and affections, so far as they have any, of the Egyptians. This is a tremendous asset, and in these critical times of very great value. 76

In his memorandum, Montagu remarked upon Wingate's linguistic abilities, but noted that British and Egyptian officials were not on the best terms, owing to the increased influence the former had been permitted while McMahon was High Commissioner. After reviewing the existing system, Montagu outlined the form of organisation most suitable for Egypt. Montagu advocated that the Foreign Office (with the aid of a permanent Under-Secretary), continue to direct Egyptian administration. He urged consolidation and co-ordination of all Middle Eastern administrations under a single department which was to be loosely connected with the India Office<sup>77</sup>. Wingate thought Montagu's scheme was superior to Cecil's. There is, however, evidence that Hardinge and Graham

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76 Montagu to War Cabinet, November 4, 1917, CAB24/34, GT series 2837.

77 Ibid.

knew nothing of Montagu's proposals<sup>78</sup>. It is possible that Montagu's report never reached the Foreign Office, nor was brought to the attention of officials outside the Cabinet.

Lest Robert Cecil or another official initiate an attempt to remove the Foreign Office control of Egypt, Hardinge set about to create a new Middle East department within the Foreign Office<sup>79</sup>. Applauding Hardinge's scheme, Wingate wrote that he was favourably disposed to beginning with a small nucleus and gradually enlarging the department<sup>80</sup>. Before the programme could be inaugurated, personnel had to be selected. The major obstacle to Hardinge's project was the strength with which Cecil's idea of a separate Middle East department was supported by other officials and politicians. Thus Hardinge was never able to implement his project.

On February 20, 1918, Curzon submitted the final report of the Egyptian Administration Committee. In this report, Curzon emphasised that the committee had been formed to consider the merits of combining the direction of Middle Eastern affairs under one department. This idea was supported by Cecil, Milner, and McMahon, but had been opposed by Hardinge, Graham, and

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- 78 Wingate to Hardinge, November 1, 1917. Hardinge replied that he and Graham had searched for Montagu's report, but could not find it. Novembdr 30, 1917, HP, Vol. VII(35), 1917.
- 79 Hardinge to Wingate, November 30, 1917, SA166/2. Hardinge also mentioned the idea in earlier letters.
- 80 Wingate to Hardinge, November 29, 1917, SA166/2; Wingate to Hardinge December 27, 1917, SA166/3/2. Hardinge's plan closely paralleled the one submitted by Capt. C.A.G. Mackintosh in January, 1918. He recommended that departments dealing with independent or semi-independent



Cheetham. Curzon also referred to Montagu's memorandum which had offered a compromise solution. The committee had five recommendations to make. They were: (1) it was premature to make definite commitments while the War continued, (2) an alteration in Egyptian control of Aden and the Arabian Peninsula would be necessary if the Arab Kingdom, under Sherif Husayn's family, survived, (3) Palestine was outside the realm of discussion, (4) the administration of Egypt could not be removed from the Foreign Office during the War, (5) the department on Egyptian affairs, headed by Graham, was to be strengthened<sup>81</sup>. Curzon concluded:

.... in this way would be constituted a separate department of the Foreign Office capable of expansion, when circumstances required, either into a larger and better equipped body still under the Secretary of State, into the more independent organisation which was the ideal of some of the witnesses. 82

Wingate agreed with Curzon's analysis, and even suggested A.T. Loyd as a suitable head of the proposed department<sup>83</sup>. But, in fact, the administration of Middle Eastern affairs was not combined during the War. The

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Arabian states, Moslem Africa, and Turkey be combined within the Foreign Office. This department was to have a Director-General whose time would be divided between London and Cairo. Under-directors would be relegated to other posts within the area. The department was to have direct communication with the India Office. SA248/15.

81 Report of the Egyptian Administrative Council, by Curzon, and adopted by Council, February 20, 1918, CAB27/12, G-162 Secret, Printed 1918.

82 Ibid.

Egyptian administration continued to be directed by Graham, while the Middle East Committee, Russian Committee, and Persian Committee met jointly, under Curzon's direction, to formulate policies for the rest of the Middle East<sup>84</sup>. Lord Robert Cecil had earlier attempted to eliminate the Middle East Committee, but had been thwarted by Curzon<sup>85</sup>. Nonetheless, Cecil remained determined to establish a more efficient method for dealing with the Middle East. After hearing from Edward Cecil that matters in Egypt were not running smoothly<sup>86</sup>, Milner spoke to Lloyd George. According to Milner, Lloyd George realised that the Foreign Office direction needed changing, but hesitated to initiate innovations, owing to personal aspects of the situation. Milner recommended that Lloyd George personally control the department and leave the routine work to Robert Cecil<sup>87</sup>.

Following this encounter, Robert Cecil wrote to Balfour that the Middle East Committee, although valuable, was not practicable. He wanted the Foreign

83 A.T. Loyd of Egyptian Civil Service.

84 These committees were combined on March 11, 1918, CAB27/23. For further information of their functions see: Curzon to Balfour, March 14, 1918, Balfour Papers, BM, 49734.

85 Curzon to Cecil, January 6, 1918, FO800/198. Cecil to Balfour, January 8, 1918. Cecil wrote that the main purpose of the joint committee seemed to be to enable Curzon and Mark Sykes 'to explain to each other how very little they know about the subject.' Balfour Papers, BM 49738.

86 Edward Cecil to Milner, January 24, 1918, MP 145.

87 Milner to Cecil, June 13, 1918, Cecil Papers, BM 51093.

and the War Office to create a special department for Middle East affairs<sup>88</sup>. This was another attempt to diminish Foreign Office domination of the Middle East policies. Cecil asked Hankey, Secretary to the Cabinet, to inform him of all War Cabinet meetings at which Middle East questions, including those on Egypt, were discussed<sup>89</sup>. By attending these meetings, Cecil hoped to circumvent the Middle East Committee led by Curzon. Having failed to secure a new department to direct Middle East affairs, Cecil decided to try and create his own department within the Foreign Office. This, of course, counteracted Hardinge's similar plan which had never materialised. Cecil chose Eyre Crowe, assistant Under-Secretary of State, to direct this department. Hardinge objected to this choice and contended that Graham was the best qualified candidate.

I have no hesitation in saying by far the best appointment as Assistant Under-Secretary for the new Department would be Ronald Graham ... He knows thoroughly Egypt ... (and) Arab and Red Sea Questions. 90

Cecil gave both suggestions to Balfour, but told Hardinge that Crowe was the better choice; he also informed Balfour of his opinion<sup>91</sup>. Actually, in his letter to Balfour, Cecil said he would abandon the entire scheme rather than work with Graham<sup>92</sup>. Balfour was aware of the continual disagreements between

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88 Cecil to Balfour, July 20, 1918, Ibid.

89 Cecil to Hankey, July 20, 1918, Cecil Papers, BM 51088.

90 Hardinge to Cecil, August 20, 1918, Balfour Papers, BM 9748.

91 Cecil to Hardinge, August 21, 1918, Cecil Papers, FO800/198.

92 Cecil to Balfour, August 21, 1918, Balfour Papers, BM 49738.

Cecil and Hardinge, consequently, he took care not to act precipitately<sup>93</sup>.

He enquired whether Graham was not the best suited for the position, since he was the only man in the Foreign Office with any knowledge of Egyptian affairs<sup>94</sup>. Cecil's reply was adamant.

When I first spoke to him (Graham) he was against the whole proposal and he still is almost passionately anxious to retain Egypt as part of the ordinary Foreign Office organisation, partly I think because he hopes some day or another to be appointed High Commissioner there. For the same reason or some other, he is anxious to maintain in Egypt diplomats doing what is in truth administrative work ... He further thinks that Egypt has little or no connection with Arabia. I can find no one else with this view. 95

On the strength of these arguments, Balfour agreed to Crowe's appointment as head of the new department. To soothe Hardinge, Balfour wrote that Graham was needed in his current capacity as assistant to Hardinge<sup>96</sup>. Cecil acted immediately to initiate the new department; he also wrote to tell Balfour that everyone in the Foreign Office seemed pleased with Crowe's appointment<sup>97</sup>. Hardinge was forced to acquiesce to Cecil's plan to incorporate the direction of Palestine, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt under one department headed by Crowe, whom Hardinge thought was incapable

93 Ian. Malcolm to Balfour, August 21, 1918. 'I believe there is another Bob [Cecil]-Hardinge rumpus going on about the famous Middle East Department.' Malcolm recommended Crowe over Graham. Balfour Papers, BM 49748

94 Balfour to Cecil, August 22, 1918, Balfour Papers BM 49748.

95 Cecil to Balfour, August 23, 1918, Balfour Papers BM 49748.

96 Balfour to Hardinge, August 28, 1918, Balfour Papers, BM 49748.

97 Cecil to Balfour, August 31, 1918, Balfour Papers, BM 49748.

of the work, although he did not think the department would survive. He was positive that its creation was merely another attempt by Cecil to exclude Graham from control of the Egyptian administration<sup>98</sup>.

Cecil ignored Hardinge's complaints, while continuing to gather personnel for the new department. His aim was to move Egypt from the direction of a diplomatic to an administrative department, and to end the dual control over Arabian affairs<sup>99</sup>. He sincerely believed that the dichotomy of control had to end immediately, not after the War ended. In this matter, Cecil had the support of Clayton who warned that Great Britain had to formulate a policy for the Middle East before the War terminated, or a great deal of trouble would ensue in the area<sup>100</sup>.

Curzon, however, was not discouraged by Cecil's complaints, or by the creation of the new department: he continued to hold meetings of the Middle East Committee. His only concession to Cecil was to admit that if the idea of a department which encompassed the administration of all the Middle East was pursued, Allenby would have to be retained in an official capacity within the department<sup>101</sup>. This suggestion, made on September 29, 1918, was the first clue that Allenby would play an active role in the Middle East after the War.

98 Hardinge to Wingate, September 6, 1918; Graham to Wingate, September 9, 1918, SA170/1.

99 Cecil to Montagu, September 13, 1918, Cecil Papers, BM 51094.

100 Clayton to Ormsby-Gore, September 13, 1918, Sykes Papers, FO800/221.

101 Curzon to Cecil, September 29, 1918, Cecil Papers, BM 51077.

Cecil was the next official to suggest that Allenby be given a permanent position in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, other civil servants heard of Cecil's proposals, and submitted their own ideas for consideration. Frank Balfour, of the Sudan civil service, spoke with Wingate concerning Egypt's future. They agreed that to deal with the Middle East from Cairo presented great difficulties for the High Commissioner. Frank Balfour thought it was more feasible to have two High Commissioners, one stationed in Cairo and the other in Baghdad. He warned Cecil:

The administrative side of Egypt badly wants strengthening to cope with the difficulties which whatever approach to self government is to be given will bring in its train. The sooner we decide how far self government there is to go and tell the people what we intend, the better. The Nationalists are getting very restive already and no doubt will claim to be included under the category of 'liberated countries' mentioned in the recent pronouncement. 102

This letter was written on November 10, 1918, one day before the Armistice was declared and three days before the delegation led by Zaghlūl presented its demands before Wingate at the Residency. That letters urging the formation of policy were written at such late dates indicates the total want of definite policy with regard to Egyptian administration. The British had been warned that the Nationalists would make demands for self-government after the War, but the government hoped to delay commitments until the more pressing problems

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102 Frank Balfour to Cecil, November 10, 1918, Cecil Papers, BM51094. Cecil made this letter an official one. Balfour was referring to the Anglo-French Declaration of October 8. Above, Chapter VI, p. 157.

caused by the War and the Armistice had been solved. Re-establishing a peace time economy and preparing for the Peace Conference were the primary considerations of the British government during the latter part of 1918.

In the months preceding the opening of the Peace Conference on January 18, 1919, politicians and diplomats were busy with preliminaries. Lloyd George and most of the Cabinet went to Paris in early January 1919; they had been occupied with the details of winning a general election in December. Balfour, Hardinge, Crowe, Tyrrell, and Drummond - all from the Foreign Office - accompanied the Prime Minister and his entourage to Paris. Curzon was given the job of Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Balfour's absence. Cecil also went to Paris. His departure pleased Hardinge, for it rendered impossible Graham's exclusion from the direction of Middle Eastern problems. While most of the leading politicians and officials were in Paris, Curzon and Graham remained in London to deal with foreign affairs. Their tenure of office was to extend through the crucial months of the Egyptian crisis. These two men made the policy decisions.

Curzon's belief in the imperial system and his stubborn attitudes were well known among British officials. Montagu described Curzon in a letter to Balfour on December 20, 1918, only a short time before Curzon took command of the Foreign Office.

.... there is .... Lord Curzon who for historical reasons of which he alone is master, geographical considerations which he has peculiarly studied, finds, reluctantly, much against his will, with very grave doubts, that it would be

dangerous if any country in the world was left to itself, if any country in the world was left to the control of any other country but ourselves, and we must go there, as I have heard him say, 'for diplomatic, economic, strategic and telegraphic reasons'. 103

Wingate's inclination to offer concessions to the Nationalists in Egypt was hardly likely to be treated with favour from such a man.

Thus Wingate's main support within the Foreign Office remained with Graham and with Hardinge, who was absent during the crucial months. Both of these men seem to have displayed more loyalty for one another than for Wingate. Then, too, Graham's own aspirations towards the position of High Commissioner should be borne in mind<sup>104</sup>. Graham doubtlessly felt that he was better qualified to be High Commissioner than most men and could rule Egypt without trouble arising from quarrels among Egyptian or British officials. Wingate, on the other hand, clearly had trouble in dealing with his subordinates, especially the British staff. He had clashed with Cecil, and to a large degree had failed to secure the confidence of Brunyate or Cheetham, the other two leading British officials in Egypt<sup>105</sup>. Nor did Wingate have the support of other politicians in London. He lacked the personal connections or prestige which

103 Montagu to Balfour, December 20, 1918, Balfour Papers, BM 49748.

104 In 1916 and in 1920 Graham wrote to Hardinge concerning the position. Graham to Hardinge, July 20, 1916, 'Speaking quite frankly, I believe that sooner or later I could run this place with fair success.' HP, Vol. II(23), 1916. Graham to Hardinge, August 11, 1920, 'I really believe I could run that country.' HP, Vol. II(43), 1920. Also see Graham to Storrs, May 27, 1920, Storrs Papers, III/2.

105 Walrond to Milner, October 13, 1918; November 10, 1918; December 9, 1918, MP 164. Walrond memoto Milner on Egypt, Autumn 1919, MP165. Note on Appointments in Egypt, Rennell Rodd, March 14, 1920, MP164.



could have been of paramount importance to an official who advocated an unpopular policy. Nor had he been able to impress upon officials in London his qualifications as High Commissioner by presenting to them carefully detailed programmes on reforms, expansion, or administration. Wingage was to be left largely to his own resources, a factor which made him vulnerable when the Nationalists began their agitation for more self-government.

CHAPTER VI  
EMERGENT NATIONALISM AND BRITISH  
OFFICIAL REACTION

Believing that the effects of the War had been insufficient to give impetus to a large-scale national movement, most British officials were not apprehensive concerning their ability to maintain British supremacy in Egypt<sup>1</sup>. These feelings of confidence were reinforced by the lack of Egyptian agitation or consolidated opposition against the Protectorate or British policies during the War. Nonetheless, from rather meagre natural resources, Egypt had given an equitable amount to aid the Allies to win a War in which she was theoretically uninvolved. These 'voluntary' contributions, in addition to the economic repercussions of the War, served to increase Egyptian grievances against British domination. Then, too, Allied pronouncements in support of self-determination for small nations and President Wilson's Fourteen Points caught the imagination of Egyptian leaders who wished to participate in the growing calls for national independence.

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1 There were exceptions to this attitude. As early as April 19, 1918, Ormsby-Gore wrote to Hankey: 'I don't much like what I learn of the prospective political situation in Egypt. We shall have trouble there with self-determination if we don't look out.' CAB21/58. On May 1, 1918, Wingate wrote to Montagu: 'Here local aspirations in this direction [self-determination] have not diminished since you were here in Egypt and I wish I could feel that the new Ruler were less amenable to the somewhat extreme influences which prevail in certain quarters.' SA168/3.

These two factors - namely emergent Egyptian nationalism and the maintenance of British supremacy - were Wingate's main considerations when he wrote to Balfour on August 31, 1918, complaining of the rift between Sultan Fu'ād and his ministers. By 1918, this schism, which had been repaired in 1917, appeared ready to split open and cause a breakdown of communications between Fu'ād and his ministers who had the confidence of the British officials<sup>2</sup>. Wingate foresaw that Fu'ād could use the ministerial hiatus to introduce Nationalists<sup>3</sup> into the government, and thereby increase his

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- 2 With the exception of Aḥmad Zīwar, the Ministry was the same as it had been in 1917. By 1918 Fu'ād was on poor terms with 'Adlī Yakan, Minister of Education, whom Fu'ād feared felt he was equal to the Sultan; 'Abd al-Khāliq Tharwat (Sarwat), Minister of Justice, whom Fu'ād had attempted to influence in several court cases; Husayn Rushdī, Prime Minister, who had supported Kamāl al-Dīn for the Sultanate; and Ismā'īl Sirrī, Minister of Public Works, who felt he had been slighted by Fu'ād. Wingate to Balfour, August 31, 1918, FO141/629.

'Adlī Yakan was a wealthy lawyer who became Prime Minister in 1921. He participated in negotiations with Lord Curzon in London during 1920 and 1921 and led the Constitutional Liberal party which rivalled the Wafd.

'Abd al-Khāliq Tharwat had been secretary to Sir Malcolm McIlwraith when he was Adviser to the Ministry of Justice; he became Prime Minister in 1927 and negotiated with Sir Austin Chamberlain.

- 3 The term 'Nationalists' in this context refers to those Egyptians, particularly Sa'd Zaghlūl, 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, Ḥamad al-Bāsil, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, 'Alī Sha'rāwī, and Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, who led the campaign for Egyptian independence in 1918-1919. British officials referred to these men as Extremists. Owing to the negative connotations of this term, it has not been employed in this study.

Ḥamad al-Bāsil was a badu from Fayrūs who had been a member of the Legislative Assembly.

Muḥammad Maḥmūd was an ex-governor of Behara Province, had studied at Oxford, and was a wealthy landowner.

Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, former editor of al-Jarīda, had attended the School of Law in Cairo, had been influenced by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, and became director of the Sultaniyya Library in 1915.

somewhat ephemeral popularity. In a conversation with Haines, the Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, Fu'ād indicated his displeasure with several aspects of the British government, particularly the inclusion of British advisers in departments, like the Police Department, which dealt primarily with internal Egyptian problems. This opinion, Wingate noted, was one continually advanced by the Nationalists, who believed British advisers 'Should have purely technical functions and not take part in administration in its executive aspects.'<sup>4</sup> Fu'ād was encouraged to adopt this stand by his old friend Ismā'īl Ṣidqī. Fu'ād also heeded the advice of what Wingate termed the 'officine nocturne'<sup>5</sup>, composed of Amīn Yehia, Ismā'īl Ṣidqī, Sa'd Zaghlūl, and 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī. By placing his confidence in these men, Fu'ād further alienated the Egyptian ministers, who, to the distress of the British officials, could neither influence nor gain access to him.

Wingate expected Fu'ād, exhorted by the Nationalists, to 'encourage the opposition of a more or less Nationalist character with which the Government in all probability will have to deal.'<sup>6</sup> However, Wingate hoped to control Fu'ād, while reducing the influence of the Nationalists. According to reports

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For a short article on each of these personalities see: al-Ahālī, April 15 - June 19, 1919.

4 Wingate to Balfour, August 31, 1918, FO141/629.

5 Wingate to Graham, June 9, 1918, SA169/1/1.

6 Wingate to Balfour, August 31, 1918, FO141/629.

later received by the Foreign Office, Wingate attempted this through personal interviews held between his aides, Symes and Keown-Boyd, and the active Nationalists<sup>7</sup>. These allegations derive largely from officials who objected to Wingate's methods of administration. Wingate's papers contain no reference to such interviews or any notes of preparation for conversations with Egyptian Nationalists during the summer of 1918. Reports of these conversations may have been verbal, but to some extent it is strange that if the conversations took place there are no papers to that effect. The matter becomes more suspect when it is considered that Wingate kept the notes given to him by his advisers and the personal notes he made before interviewing Egyptians. Therefore, later criticism of Wingate's methods of acting through private channels and not through British advisers must be carefully weighed and not over-estimated. Since Egyptian sources never mention the interviews, it must be held that, if the interviews occurred, they were not considered of great importance by either Egyptian or British officials.

Sources date the beginning of attempts to organise Egyptian support for independence in September 1918, when three groups of prominent Egyptians began reflecting upon the question. During this month, Zaghlūl met with

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<sup>7</sup> Graham to Hardinge, January 22, 1919, HP, Vol. II(40), 1919. Graham reported that Burnett-Stuart had verbally told about Wingate's method, which Graham felt was highly irregular. No mention of these interviews is found in Wingate's papers. If Wingate ordered the interviews, it is incongruous that he failed to mention them to Hardinge or Graham, to whom he wrote frequently and at length.

Muḥammad Maḥmūd and Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid to discuss the future of Egypt. 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī had been invited to this meeting, but had been too ill to attend<sup>8</sup>. After this meeting, Maḥmūd raised the issue of forming a delegation to send to the Peace Conference. Zaghlūl put a cold shower (dush bārīd) to the idea, by saying that the time had not arrived for such action<sup>9</sup>. However, Maḥmūd was not the first to suggest the idea, for Zaghlūl himself had proposed that Egypt be represented at the Peace Conference during an interview with Mark Sykes in 1915<sup>10</sup>. After talking with Maḥmūd, Zaghlūl discussed the scheme with Rushdī, who had been considering the idea in co-operation with his friend 'Adlī Yakan. 'Umar Ṭūsūn was also thinking about the idea, and he approached both Zaghlūl and Rushdī concerning the plan at a tea-party at Ra's al-Tīn Palace on October 9. When Ṭūsūn suggested forming a delegation (wafd<sup>11</sup>), Zaghlūl replied that the idea was beautiful<sup>12</sup>,

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8 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād, Sa'd Zaghlūl (Cairo, 1936), p.192.

9 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, Hādhihi ḥiyātī (Cairo, n.d.), p.72.

10 Sykes report, August 10, 1915, CAB 17/176.

11 The term 'wafd' in this study refers to the delegation, led by Zaghlūl, which presented Egyptian demands to the Peace Conference and to British officials. In 1918 the wafd was not a political party; it evolved as such at a later date. Louis Cantori discusses the evolution of the wafd from a group of Egyptians into an elite political party (The Wafd) in his unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The Wafd: a political party in Egypt (Chicago, 1966).

12 'Umar Ṭūsūn, Mudhakkarāt bimā ṣadara 'annā mundhu fajr al-ḥaraka al-waṭaniyya al-Miṣriyya min sanat 1918 ilā sanat 1928 (Cairo, 1942), p.6. al-'Aqqād, p.192. Sources all agree that the idea of forming a wafd was discussed at this party. The interpretations given of these events in Arabic sources have been noted in Chapter I. Accounts in English of these events may be found in Jacob M. Landau, Parliaments and parties in Egypt (New York, 1954), and Cantori. A German account is found in Ernst Klingmüller, Geshichte der Wafd partei (Berlin, 1937).

and that he would discuss it with his close friends.

Fu'ād was also concerned about the future of Egypt, and debated the problem with Wingate on October 12. At this time, Fu'ād remarked that Wingate did not understand him: consequently, he looked forward to going to London after the War to discuss Egyptian matters with officials there. Wingate suggested that Fu'ād put his views on paper, as the status of Egypt was to be considered after the War. Fu'ād retorted that he wanted a Parliament with a Senate and a Ministry which would relieve him of the onus of personal responsibility. Wingate told Fu'ād that the Legislative Assembly in the past had proved futile and generally worthless. Owing to the backward nature of Egypt, Wingate did not believe the country was ready for the institution of democratic government<sup>13</sup>. This interview revealed that Fu'ād shared the aspirations of other Egyptians and expected to voice his complaints in London directly after the War.

On October 23, at a Residency garden party in Alexandria, Zaghlūl, Rushdī, and Ṭūsūn once again met and discussed their plans. At this party, Zaghlūl and Ṭūsūn arranged to travel together the following day on the morning train to Cairo. During this trip, Ṭūsūn spoke to Zaghlūl about the formation of a wafd. Zaghlūl, while accepting the idea in principle, doubted that the Egyptians could provide enough money to finance the venture, but thought Sha'rāwī could be persuaded to give £10,000. The two men parted in Cairo

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13 Wingate note on conversation with Fu'ād, October 12, 1918, SA170/3/3.

after agreeing to meet again<sup>14</sup>. As events unravelled, Zaghlūl and Tūsūn were not to converse until November 12. In the interim, Zaghlūl met with 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, Luṭfī al-Sayyid, and 'Alī Sha'rāwī. These five friends, as Luṭfī al-Sayyid called them, were determined to fight for Egyptian independence. As Zaghlūl had predicted, Sha'rāwī consented to give £10,000 to further this aim<sup>15</sup>.

In Hawliyyāt Miṣr, Aḥmad Shafīq reports that Rushdī was fully aware of Zaghlūl's discussions concerning independence with members of the Legislative Assembly and former members of the People's Party. According to Shafīq, Rushdī did not report these meetings to the British Commander-in-Chief, who under martial law could have deported the men<sup>16</sup>. Fu'ād was also reputed to have known and approved of Zaghlūl's activities<sup>17</sup>.

While Zaghlūl and his friends attempted to form a delegation and devise a programme for it, with Tūsūn working independently in the same direction, Wingate continually warned the Foreign Office to expect some form of Nationalist agitation after the War. Wingate was worried by Fu'ād's

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14 Tūsūn, p.7. Makram 'Ubayd speech in al-Ahrām, January 10, 1935.

15 Luṭfī al-Sayyid p.178. Aḥmad Shafīq, Hawliyyāt Miṣr al-sīyāsīyya (n.p. 1926), pp.147-48.

16 Shafīq, p.146.

17 Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Fu'ād al-awwal (Cairo, 1939), p.98. Elie Kedourie, 'Sa'ad Zaghlul and the British, ' p. 143.



acceptance of the Nationalist elements and by his adherence to their demands. From non-official sources in Cairo, there were reports that Wingate seemed to have lost control over Fu'ād, but no suggestions for improving the situation were made<sup>18</sup>. In the Foreign Office, Graham was inclined to discount Wingate's worries, because he believed Fu'ād should be handled more firmly. He contended that Fu'ād's entourage was superior to any in the past, and that its presence did not foreshadow trouble. Graham even said that Wingate had been accustomed to having his own way in Khartoum for so long that he found it difficult to accept the usual opposition in Cairo<sup>19</sup>. On the other hand, Robert Cecil remarked that it was disquieting to hear of friction between the Residency and the Sultan<sup>20</sup>.

In Egypt, where he was closer to the growing nationalist sentiment, Wingate was not as confident as the officials in London. On October 19, 1918, after an interview with Fu'ād, Wingate wrote to Hardinge to predict a

18 Herbert diary, September 28, 1918, PPC. Herbert wrote that Lee Stack had remarked, when visiting Cairo, that Wingate looked ill and unable to cope with Egyptian problems. Osmond Walrond to Milner, September 22, 1918, wrote that Wingate did not stand up to Fu'ād, but that the British could obtain the support of the leading Egyptian shaykhs. MP164.

19 Graham minutes, October 7, 1918, numbers 163509-163510. On Wingate's dispatch of August 31, 1918, to Balfour, Graham wrote that Wingate so rarely sent official dispatches that it was noteworthy when he did so. He added: 'Indeed these dispatches show that the calm sea of Egyptian politics is scarcely ruffled by puffs of breeze which may be variable but do not presage any kind of storm.' FO371/3199.

20 Cecil minute, October 7, 1918, number 163510, FO371/3199.

'troubulous winter',<sup>21</sup>. To placate the Sultan, Wingate recommended some small concessions like the approval of new palace furniture and assurances concerning ex-Khedive 'Abbās<sup>22</sup>. The latter was of particular importance, because Fu'ād worried lest 'Abbās should wish to return to Egypt after the War, or attempt to claim his considerable property there. Fu'ād, especially sensitive to rumours that 'Abbās was still popular among the Egyptians, wanted to ascertain that there was no danger of his return. Eventually, all of 'Abbās's estates were taken under government control, and he was forbidden entry.

Wingate informed Hardinge of a rumour that a peace deputation of Egyptians would present a petition for President Wilson's support as soon as the War ended. The rumour was given substance after a crowd, thinking peace had been declared, gathered at the United States Consulate in Alexandria<sup>23</sup>. Wingate did not count heavily upon this rumour, while Hardinge ignored it altogether.

On October 24, 1918, Ismā'īl Kāmil, head of the exiled Nationalists in Berne, sent Balfour a petition from the Committee of the Nationalist Party of Egypt which supported President Wilson's programme. In a plea for independence, the letter ended:

21 Wingate to Hardinge, October 19, 1918, SA170/2/2.

22 Ibid. The Sultan requested new furniture, but owing to the War, the British hesitated to agree. Wingate later asked Cheetham to urge approval of the matter. Wingate note to Cheetham, October 21, 1918, FO141/629.

23 Ibid., private and personal addendum.

The occupation of the Nile Valley by a Foreign Power must always be a continual menace to free navigation and to the different interests of all peoples, and the peace so much desired by all, will be but a deception if Egypt is not restored to her peaceful children, and her independence as a Nation guaranteed by the Society of Nations.

The Committee firmly hopes that Mr. Wilson will never permit the ancient land of the Pharaohs to remain in the chains of Britain, but that she will rise from this war free and mistress of her own destiny. 24

Since this statement originated from Nationalists in exile, British officials felt it was safe to ignore the warning. They did not consider that a similar desire was developing within Egypt.

Although he did not know what course to adopt in order to stop nationalist unrest, Wingate recognised the dangers inherent in the movement. He asked Cheetham to confer with Rushdī and Fu'ād, in hopes that they would have alternative plans<sup>25</sup>. However, Wingate was not so naive as to presume that Fu'ād and Rushdī were detached from the movement for self-determination. For this reason, Wingate remarked to Allenby that he was constantly plagued with 'Sultanic worries'<sup>26</sup>. On October 20, Brunyate submitted a note in which he discussed at length the divisions between the ministers and Fu'ād. He concluded that Fu'ād had not learned the lesson in 1917 that 'Cabinets in the last resort are decided on in London.'<sup>27</sup>

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24 Ismā'īl Kāmil to Balfour, October 24, 1918, FO141/773.

25 Wingate to Cheetham, October 21, 1918, FO141/629.

26 Wingate to Allenby, October 19, 1918, SA170/2/2.

27 Brunyate to Wingate, October 20, 1918, FO141/629.

The growing nationalist fervour was further encouraged by the Anglo-French declaration in favour of self-determination for Syria, Mesopotamia and other nations. This declaration was published in Egypt on November 9, 1918, without press comment, owing to wartime censorship<sup>28</sup>. The declaration had been drawn up by the French and the British at a War Cabinet meeting on September 20. The object of the declaration was to allay Arab fears concerning the intentions of Great Britain and France in the Middle East, and to reassure the Arabs until the matter could be settled at the Peace Conference<sup>29</sup>. However, it had more far-reaching effects than the British had anticipated. Concerning the declaration, Wingate wrote:

I think it is not unlikely that self-determination policy ... may have its repercussion among Egyptian nationalists ... who will, no doubt, desire similar treatment for Egypt.

I have no definite indication that active agitation in this sense is at present probable, but there are rumours which I cannot altogether ignore that natives have approached American representatives here with a view to their aspirations being made known to President Wilson. If it is possible for you to give me some indication of views of His Majesty's Government in the event of press discussion arising regarding future of Egypt it would be very helpful to me. 30

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- 28 al-Ahrām, November 9, 1918; al-Muqattam, November 9, 1918. In the latter, the declaration was placed on an inside page. Wingate asked if press restrictions might be relieved for a controlled press discussion and explanation of the declaration, but he was refused. Wingate to Foreign Office, November 6, 1918, SA170/3/3; FO407/183.
- 29 Balfour to Civil Commissioner in Baghdad, November 28, 1918, FO371/5227. Louis Mallet, February 7, 1919, 'Genesis of Anglo-French declaration', Lothian Papers, GD40-17-37.
- 30 Wingate to Balfour, November 8, 1918, FO407/183.

Wingate wrote privately to Graham that the declaration would affect Egypt and ended:

I have no doubt that H.M.G. has a ready answer for all such criticism [calls for self-determination] but it would help me greatly to know, as soon as possible, the line I should adopt when they come, as they undoubtedly will. 31.

Thus, Wingate expected the Nationalists to make a formal complaint, but remained ignorant of the policy which the Foreign Office wished him to pursue. It appears that the officials in London had not only failed to develop a coherent policy with regard to Egypt, but preferred to delay deciding upon one as long as possible.

To Wingate's official and personal requests for an explanation of British policy, Graham replied that the Foreign Office had no 'indication of such native aspirations nor of form they are likely to take',<sup>32</sup>. He concluded that reforms would not be undertaken without consultation with leading Egyptians. Graham drafted this reply to Wingate even after he had been informed, through his personal correspondence, of Zaghlūl's visit to the Residency on November 5. This meeting was obviously a preliminary one, in which Zaghlūl attempted to gauge the official British opinion regarding the future status of Egypt. At this meeting, Zaghlūl requested that the Legislative Assembly be reconvened. To this request, Wingate replied, 'Allah ma es Sabairin, izza sabiru',<sup>33</sup> or God

31 Wingate to Graham, November 6, 1918, SA170/2/1.

32 Foreign Office to Wingate, November 13, 1918, SA170/3/3; FO371/364.

33 Wingate to Graham, November 6, 1918, SA170/2/1.

helps those who are patient. After this interview, Wingate was condemned by certain British officials for encouraging the Nationalists by granting interviews and recommending concessions.

Cheetham and Brunyate, upon whom Wingate relied heavily, both wanted Fu'ād's pretensions to power halted, but Wingate believed that alienating the Sultan would aggravate the situation.

.... in adopting what I believe to be the policy of H.M.G. as regards the Sultan, I run the risk of making a cleavage between them [British officials] and the High Commissioner; but this fact does not particularly disturb me as long as I am quite sure I am carrying out the policy of the British Government. 34

In short, the British wanted Fu'ād to remain under their domination, while retaining a guise of authority for the benefit of the Egyptians. Wingate, on the other hand, realised that a split with Fu'ād would render the situation impossible, and that concessions, however unpleasant, had to be granted to assure Fu'ād's support.

On November 11, 1918, the Armistice was declared, and nationalist feelings began to gather momentum. On the same day as the Armistice, Zaghlūl, with 'Alī Sha'rāwī, and 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, met Ulrich Alexander, Wingate's aide-de-camp, in the reading room at the Muḥammad 'Alī Club. Zaghlūl asked for an interview with Wingate. When Alexander asked the reason for the interview, Zaghlūl replied that he wished to introduce Sha'rāwī and Fahmī to Wingate. Realising that these men were Nationalists, and

would probably put forth their views during the interview, Alexander asked Keown-Boyd, Wingate's private secretary, for his assent before agreeing to Zaghlūl's request. After conferring with Cheetham and Wingate, Keown-Boyd made an appointment for Zaghlūl to see Wingate on November 13<sup>35</sup>.

Alexander was correct to surmise that Zaghlūl intended to discuss Egyptian independence with Wingate. According to Makram 'Ubayd, Zaghlūl decided directly after his conversation with Tūsūn on October 24 to work for the dispatch of a delegation to Great Britain. After this meeting, he made every effort to gather supporters, first from his closest friends, 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, Sha'rāwī, Luṭfī al-Sayyid, and Muḥammad Maḥmūd<sup>36</sup>. While awaiting news from Zaghlūl, Tūsūn in Alexandria was also gathering followers. Tūsūn reports that after hearing on November 11 that Zaghlūl had accepted the idea of sending a delegation, he went to Cairo, where he stayed in Shepherd's Hotel. On the following day, Muḥammad Maḥmūd telephoned him to report the recent developments. After a telephone call from Zaghlūl, Tūsūn, accompanied by Muḥammad Sa'īd<sup>37</sup>, met with Zaghlūl and his four friends to

35 Alexander to Wingate, March 25, 1919, SA237/10. Wingate did not remark upon Alexander's interpretation of the arrangements for the meeting, nor do Arabic sources refer to the details, but it is likely that Alexander's account is correct.

36. Makram 'Ubayd speech, al-Ahrām, January 10, 1935.

37 Muḥammad Sa'īd had been Prime Minister prior to World War I; he acted as Prime Minister from May 1919 until November 1919.

argue over the plans for sending a delegation<sup>38</sup>. At this time, Zaghlūl feared that two separate delegations, each demanding a hearing in London, would be formed: one led by Ṭūsūn or Sa'īd, and the other led by Zaghlūl. Zaghlūl told Ṭūsūn of the impending meeting at the Residency, and said that Ṭūsūn was free to act as he wished, although he hoped Ṭūsūn would agree to join with him. By this time, Zaghlūl had probably received the written permission for the interview on November 13. This was, however, a mere formality, since Wingate had always made a point of being available for interviews with leading Egyptians. Shafīq noted that Zaghlūl conferred with Fahmī and Sha'rāwī immediately after hearing of the acceptance in order to plan what was to be said to Wingate<sup>39</sup>.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of November 13, Wingate received Zaghlūl, Fahmī, and Sha'rāwī at the Residency. This interview, which marked the beginning of the post-War struggle between the Egyptian Nationalists and the British, began with Wingate telling Zaghlūl and his friends that Egypt was more prosperous than it had ever been, and that it owed this prosperity to Great Britain<sup>40</sup>. While agreeing with Wingate, Zaghlūl advocated the

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38 Ṭūsūn, pp.8-9. According to Fahmī, Ṭūsūn was angry that he had not been included in the original plans. p.75. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Rāfi'ī, Thawrat sanat 1919 (Cairo, 1946), p.76.

39 Shafīq, pp.148-49.

40 The account of the interview is taken from Wingate's Arabic version, which he received privately from an unidentified Egyptian friend, who was in the Wafd during 1920. Wingate's translation in English closely parallels the original. The Arabic version found in Wingate's papers



immediate abolition of martial law, censorship, and other wartime measures. Wingate advised them to be patient. In a polite disagreement, Zaghlūl replied that he did not understand what Wingate was trying to say, whereupon Wingate told him that the Egyptians lacked foresight. This remark offended Zaghlūl, who considered himself an elected representative of the Egyptian people. Wingate stressed that Egyptian Nationalists had not been moderate in their demands prior to the War, and had therefore caused a great deal of unnecessary trouble. At this point, Sha'rāwī remarked that Egyptians wished to be true friends to England, as free men to free men, not as slaves to free men<sup>41</sup>. Wingate asked if they were demanding independence. Zaghlūl answered in the affirmative, while Fahmī rejoined that they wanted 'complete independence'<sup>42</sup>. In support of their demands, the men pointed out that Egyptians had worked hard for the War, had a long glorious history, and an elite of educated and able people. In comparison to countries like Serbia or Montenegro, which had been promised independence, Egypt was more advanced<sup>43</sup>. To counteract

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is almost identical to that reproduced in Shafīq, although the two differ slightly in ascribing certain passages to different speakers. Another version is found in al-Rāfi'ī, p.70-72. Shorter accounts are given in Fahmī, p.76; al-'Aqqād, pp.194-200; Muḥammad 'Abd'l Fath, al-mas'ala al-Miṣriyya wa'l-Wafd (n.p., n.d.).

Wingate's Arabic version, SA170/3/2. The English version is found in his notes on the political crisis in Egypt 1918-1920, SA151/8.

41 Wingate Arabic version of November 13, 1918 meeting, SA170/3/2. Inna narīd an nakūn aṣḍiqā' li-Inkliterra sadāqatan al-ḥurr l'il-ḥurr lā al-'abd l'il ḥurr.

42 Istiqlāl tāmm.

43 Shafīq ascribes this speech to Fahmī, Wingate's version reports Zaghlūl was the speaker. Cantori feels Shafīq is correct. It is possible that at a later date the author of Wingate's account gave more importance to Zaghlūl's role.

these arguments, Wingate emphasised that there were many uneducated people in Egypt, and that its strategic geographic position made it vulnerable to foreign encroachment. Zaghlūl replied that the Egyptians wished to remain friendly with Great Britain and were willing to guarantee the safety of the Suez Canal, the road to India. Sha'rāwī added that the Egyptians might consent to the retention of the British Financial Adviser. In closing, Zaghlūl told Wingate that the Egyptian leaders considered Great Britain the greatest liberal power in the world, and were willing to present their demands solely to officials in London. Wingate ended the interview by saying that he had listened carefully to the debate, but had no idea of the British Government's intentions with regard to their demands. He reaffirmed that the meeting had been an unofficial one. Since Wingate undoubtedly knew approximately what Zaghlūl and his friends were going to say, he was prepared to counter most of their arguments for independence, although he could not refute the fact that Egypt had aided the War effort and that lesser countries were gaining independence. Lacking instructions from the Foreign Office, Wingate dealt with the Nationalists astutely, without alienating them, but promising nothing.

Afterwards, Wingate saw Rushdī, who had already seen Zaghlūl, following the interview, which ended at noon. Rushdī presented Wingate with a letter requesting permission for himself and 'Adlī to travel to London to confer with officials there. Wingate was under the impression that Fu'ād was aware of the demands made by Rushdī and Zaghlūl; this is corroborated by most

Arabic sources. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd states that Fu'ād wanted both Rushdī and Zaghlūl to go to London<sup>44</sup>. Even though they were not on the best of terms, Rushdī doubtless kept Fu'ād informed about the Nationalists and their activities. In describing the meetings with Zaghlūl and Rushdī, Wingate, in a letter to Hardinge, remarked that Zaghlūl represented a not inconsiderable sector of Egyptian public opinion. While recognising that Zaghlūl's arguments were well founded, he simultaneously demeaned the real motives of the Nationalists.

I must admit their attitude was generally correct, and to anyone less conversant than I am with Egyptian methods, their contentions would appear to have been dictated by pure patriotism and would give the impression that at long last Lord Dufferin's inarticulate masses had become articulate and that we were about to reap the results of our patient labours of the past 40 years, in seeing a complete Egyptian regeneration on political lines dear to the British democracy. 45

Wingate informed Hardinge that Zaghlūl and his friends wished to travel to London whenever transport became available, and that he had no objections to their departure. It is noteworthy that Wingate expressed this opinion in a private letter, not officially or in the course of the interview with Zaghlūl; Hardinge was subsequently to make the letter official. However, during the interview Wingate had not objected vigorously when the Nationalists stated their intentions. Wingate could hardly have done so on November 13, because

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44 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, p.98.

45 Wingate to Hardinge, November 14, 1918, FO141/773; HP, Vol. IV (39), 1918.

at that time he had no indication that the Foreign Office officials would refuse to see the Nationalists. He believed that the Nationalists would be welcome in London to discuss their views. In this case, Wingate - far from the pressures and additional work caused by the Peace Conference - miscalculated the effect news that Nationalist leaders from Egypt were coming to London would have upon officials. These officials felt that they were too busy with details for the Conference to be concerned with Egyptian Nationalists, whose demands they considered extreme and totally unacceptable.

In accord with Rushdī, Wingate knew that the question of the form that the Egyptian government was to take had to be settled quickly.

If these burning questions are not settled now, we are likely to have considerable difficulty in the future. The general spirit of self-determination to which the war has given birth, had taken a firm hold in Egypt and I think it is only just that the Sultan, his ministers and the Egyptians generally should be told how they stand, but presumably such conversations as are now suggested would be conducted entirely through His Majesty's Government and Egypt (being a British Protectorate) would in no sense come within the scope of the International Peace Conference, though the fact that India, the Dominions etc. are to be consulted, has naturally given our Egyptian friends hopes of similar consideration. 46

In his official dispatch of November 17, covering the events of November 13, Wingate reiterated this position. He commented that Rushdī was aware of Nationalist claims and felt it prudent for both himself and 'Adlī to accompany

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46 Wingate to Foreign Office, November 17, 1918. FO141/773. He wrote to Allenby, November 15, 1918, that his suspicions that the Nationalists were influenced by Allied declarations favouring self-determination had been well founded. 'The matter is giving me no little concern.' SA170/3/1.

the Nationalists to London. Wingate concluded:

I am aware that the three Nationalist leaders visited the Sultan before approaching me and there is little doubt that neither the Sultan nor Ministers feel strong enough to oppose the Nationalist demands however unacceptable they may appear to be.

It is probable the new movement will soon take a more pronounced form and meetings to discuss the question are, I hear, contemplated by prominent Egyptians. I would be glad to have any instructions His Majesty's Government may consider desirable to give me. Should the Ministers be permitted to proceed to London, I would propose to send Sir William Brunyate and Sir Milne Cheetham at the same time - the former would be especially valuable in connection with Capitulations questions and the latter is fully conversant with all current Egyptian matters. 47

As Wingate predicted, the Nationalists, after the interview, took steps to consolidate their position and to formulate their programme. On November 15, Zaghlūl conferred with Ṭūsūn, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, Sha'rāwī, and Fahmī. According to Ṭūsūn, no delegation had been formally organised at this time<sup>48</sup>. However, 'Ubayd related that Zaghlūl met with Ismā'īl Ṣidqī on the fifteenth when Ṣidqī, who had staunchly supported Ṭūsūn, came and offered to help Zaghlūl<sup>49</sup>. Zaghlūl was reluctant to accept Ṣidqī's offer, since his proclivity for Ṭūsūn's group was well known; Zaghlūl's followers were also hesitant to agree to Ṣidqī's inclusion, but he refused to be rejected. He convinced Zaghlūl of his sincerity in wanting to help them to obtain Egyptian rights. At this time, Zaghlūl was still concerned that Ṭūsūn was to form another

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47 Wingate to Foreign Office, November 17, 1918, FO141/773.

48 Ṭūsūn, p.22.

49 'Ubayd, al-Ahrām, January 10, 1935.

delegation under the leadership of Muḥammad Sa'īd<sup>50</sup>. Zaghlūl was anxious to avoid divisions which would weaken the Egyptian case when it was presented to the British. To prevent this situation, he sent Maḥmūd to Ṭūsūn and Sa'īd in order to convince them not to form another delegation. Maḥmūd and Fahmī both resolutely refused to consider anyone but Zaghlūl as president of the delegation. His leadership was recognised by the time Ḥamad al-Bāsil began, on November 18, to circulate petitions urging the dispatch of a delegation, led by Zaghlūl, to present Egyptian grievances to the Peace Conference. On November 20, Zaghlūl, as Vice President of the Legislative Assembly, asked for passports for himself and the Committee of 14. This request was repeated on November 23. The Committee included Zaghlūl, his four friends, and prominent Egyptians who had been enlisted after Ṭūsūn and his supporters agreed not to form another delegation. These men included former members of the al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī, Muṣṭafā al-Naḥḥās who became Zaghlūl's 'right hand man', and Dr. Ḥāfiẓ 'Afīfī. Sīnūt Ḥannā became the first Coptic member, followed by George Khayyat<sup>51</sup>.

By the middle of November, Ṭūsūn's opposition to Zaghlūl had disappeared. A major reason for his acceptance of a lesser role was the Sultan's antagonism. Since Ṭūsūn had a claim to the throne, Fu'ād was sensitive to any attempts he made to become prominent in political circles. For this reason, Fu'ād himself

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50 Ibid., Fahmī, pp. 72-84; Shafīq, p. 150.

51 'Ubayd, al-Ahrām, January 19, 1935; Keown-Boyd note on interview with Ḥamad al-Bāsil on November 18, 1918. Zaghlūl to High Commissioner, November 20, 1918; November 23, 1918, FO141/810; FO141/773.

ordered Rushdī to cancel Ṭūsūn's proposed meeting of Egyptian princes and notables which had been scheduled for November 16<sup>52</sup>. After this meeting was cancelled, Ṭūsūn held a smaller one of princes only on November 19. At this time, Ṭūsūn told his guests that Zaghlūl should be left free to act, since the majority of the people supported him. He suggested that the princes aid Zaghlūl from a distance, and noted that the ex-Khedive 'Abbās was working along the same lines<sup>53</sup>.

While their requests for passports were under consideration, Zaghlūl and the Committee of 14 began a campaign to legitimise their movement by gaining the support of the members of the Legislative Assembly and provincial leaders. They circulated a pledge to the members of the Legislative Assembly, which stated that the signatories appointed Zaghlūl, Sha'rāwī, 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Makabbātī, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, and Luṭfī al-Sayyid to act on behalf of the Assembly in seeking Egyptian independence. The authorised delegation was given permission in the pledge to proceed to the Peace Conference, while noting that £10,000 had already been

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52 Ṭūsūn, p. 17. Haines note to Wingate, November 16, 1918. Wingate note, November 10, 1918, pointed out that Fu'ād was displeased with Ṭūsūn's political activity, and was anxious to diminish his influence. SA170/2.

53 Note on meeting of princes, November 19, 1918, SA170/3/2. British officials were interested in the references to 'Abbās. In his memoirs, Ṭūsūn remarked that Zaghlūl later came to talk with him; in the course of this meeting, Zaghlūl became convinced that Ṭūsūn had sincerely advocated a nationalist programme. p. 27.

given to subsidise the delegation<sup>54</sup>. A similar pledge was circulated among the Provincial Councils, and members of the Municipal and Local Councils; this pledge contained the names of 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī and Muḥammad 'Alī Bey<sup>55</sup>. The Zaghlulists were forced to resort to this method of gaining mass support, because under martial law it was impossible to hold elections, nor were there any indications that the Legislative Assembly would be recalled. That the delegation was able to circulate these petitions among a large section of the Egyptian population indicated that they were fairly well organised prior to November 21 when Haines first forbade their distribution.

Interestingly, when these authorisations were first circulated, the delegation had not yet formulated a definite programme. Al-Rāfi'ī states that this programme was officially signed on November 23, the same day that the committee of 14 asked permission to travel<sup>56</sup>. The programme was composed of 26 paragraphs the first of which defined the primary aim of the wafd as gaining independence for Egypt. For the most part, the programme delineated

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54 The Fledge signed by the members of the Legislative Assembly, FO141/773.

55 Petition in Arabic with translation, SA170/3/4. This petition has a large hole in it where a leading 'umda, after hearing that the British opposed those who signed the document, put his thumb through his signature. To the British, this indicated that the Egyptians were not sincere in their demands for independence. R.M. Graves (Inspector) to Keown-Boyd, December 1, 1918. For more on the distribution of the petitions see: 'Ubayd, al-Ahrām, January 10, 1935.

56 al-Rāfi'ī, p.75; Shaffīq, pp.154-56; al-'Aqqād, pp.195-96; Landau, p.154; Klingmüller, p.147-51. The members were: Zaghlūl, Sha'rāwī, Fahmī, Muḥammad 'Alī Bey, Ismā'īl Ṣidqī, Maḥmūd 'Abu'l-Naṣr, Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, Dr. Ḥāfiẓ 'Afīfī, Sīnūt Ḥannā, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, 'Abd al-Latīf al-Makabbātī, Ḥamad al-Bāsil, George Khayyat, and Muṣṭafā al-Naḥḥās.



the terms of membership and structure of the organisation in which the president was empowered with broad executive duties. Under this programme the wafd was to urge Egyptian independence within a constitutional framework.

After Wingate heard of the rapid spread of talk concerning independence and ending the Protectorate, he ordered the Inspectors to stop gossip on the subject<sup>57</sup>. In such a way, he hoped to be able to halt the mounting influence of the Nationalists. Haines subsequently spoke with Sha'rāwī, Luṭfī al-Sayyid, Ḥamad al-Bāsil, and Fahmī, in an attempt to persuade them to stop the authorisations (tawkīls).<sup>58</sup> Keown-Boyd then attempted to persuade Ḥamad al-Bāsil to desist from his nationalist activities, but Bāsil, like his friends, refused to do so<sup>59</sup>. It was clear that the Nationalists were going to campaign for independence among members of the Legislative Assembly, and private individuals, and through the Egyptian press. During the later part of November and early December, the press began a series of articles on independence, the forthcoming Peace Conference, and the weakness of the Egyptian educational and industrial spheres<sup>60</sup>. While the Nationalists became more determined to use every available method to gain their demands, the Foreign Office became more resolved to reject them.

After receiving Wingate's official dispatch of November 17, in which the interview with Zaghlūl was described, Graham wrote that it was regrettable

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57 Wingate to all Inspectors, November 19, 1913,<sup>?</sup> FO141/810.

58 Haines to Wingate, November 21, 1913,<sup>?</sup> FO141/773.

59 Residency note, November 18, 1918, SA170/3/2.

60 al-Ahrām, al-Ahālī. Even al-Muqattam wrote of the need for reforms.

that Wingate had not refused the Nationalist demands more firmly. According to Graham, Great Britain did not consider that Zaghlūl represented the responsible elements within Egypt, nor did the government have time to negotiate with the Egyptians. Moreover, Britain had no intention of giving the Nationalists an opportunity to present their demands before the Peace Conference, as this could prove to be an embarrassment<sup>61</sup>. These views, so strongly stated in Foreign Office minutes, were not relayed to Wingate, nor was he promptly informed that the Foreign Office wished him to adopt a more obdurate position vis-à-vis the Nationalists.

Thus Wingate was caught between the growing Nationalist movement in Egypt and the increasing opposition to it in the Foreign Office. He had to operate between these two poles, trying to placate each side and bring them closer together. In hopes of gaining support for his difficult task, Wingate asked British officials in Cairo for their opinions on Egyptian nationalism and for suggestions on the best methods with which to deal with it. On November 18, Brunyate submitted a full report, in which he noted that nationalism was not a recent development in Egypt, but that it had always been effectively channelled by British officials. He maintained that the best defence against the Nationalists was a constructive British policy of reform. He belittled the nationalism professed by the Egyptian ministers, and remarked that Zaghlūl had lost a great deal of support from the members of

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61 Graham minute, November 25, 1918, on Wingate's dispatch of November 17, 1918, FO371/2304.

the Legislative Assembly. Believing that the ministers were open to reason concerning constitutional reform, Brunyate suggested that his proposed constitution, allowing for the creation of a bicameral legislature with European representation in the Upper Chamber, be considered. Before submitting this proposed constitution, Brunyate told Rushdī about it. Rushdī made no comment, and Brunyate took this silence as assent for the plan<sup>62</sup>. Actually, nothing could have been further from the truth, for Brunyate's proposals were eventually to become a key factor in precipitating Rushdī's resignation as Prime Minister. At the time Brunyate submitted the draft plan, he was convinced that the Egyptians would accept it. Wingate relayed Brunyate's letter on nationalism and his proposals to Hardinge without comment, except to remark that Brunyate did not attach as much importance to Egyptian nationalism as he might<sup>63</sup>. Graham fully agreed with Brunyate's estimate of Egyptian nationalism, but doubted that the proposed constitution was feasible<sup>64</sup>.

Wingate, who was convinced that the current outbreak of nationalism could not be as easily repressed as previous ones during Graham's sojourn in Cairo, continued to report that the Foreign Office had to recognise the inherent danger of the Zaghlulist movement.

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62 Brunyate to Wingate, November 18, 1918, SA170/3/2; FO141/773. Brunyate reported that he had discussed the matter with Rushdī on a train travelling from Alexandria to Cairo.

63 Wingate to Hardinge, November 19, 1918, SA170/3/4; FO371/3204.

64 Graham minute on Wingate letter of November 19, 1918, FO371/3204.

It should be recognised that they are now voicing the sentimental aspirations of a majority of the small native educated class, aspirations which (however disastrous or ill-advised might be their practical realisation) appeal to the susceptibilities of a considerable section of the Moslem population. On the other hand it should be noted that their views have been expressed with remarkable frankness: and that there has been no apparent disposition to engage in secret agitation or revolutionary propaganda. 65

Because Wingate considered that the Nationalists had been honestly stating their intentions, and were unlikely to engage in revolutionary activities, he was inclined to believe that negotiations could be fruitful.

Officials in the Foreign Office adopted the opposing view. Graham wrote of the Nationalists:

The whole movement in Egypt need not be taken too seriously; it represents the vague aspirations aroused by President Wilson's statements and by the Declaration regarding the Arabs, also a vague hope that Egypt might obtain something out of the Peace Conference and a feeling that the chance must not be allowed to slip. Among thinking Egyptians, there is no seditious spirit and few of them would contemplate our leaving the country without dismay. This, however, in no wise prevents them from joining in a popular agitation for our departure. It must also be admitted that there is, as yet, in Egypt no feeling of gratification or pride in belonging to the British Empire. 66

The former was initialled by Balfour, the King, and the Cabinet. Obviously, the group of politicians responsible for Egyptian policy were aware that discontent existed within Egypt, but were willing to accept Graham's analysis rather than negotiate, as Wingate urged, with the Nationalists whose popularity

65 Wingate to Balfour, November 20, 1918, FO141/772.

66 Graham minute on Wingate letter of November 10, 1918, written on December 11, 1918, FO371/3204.

steadily increased.

The Nationalists refused to wait until the conclusion of the Peace Conference for their demands to be considered, and did not delay in augmenting their support. When the petitions authorising Zaghlūl and his followers to proceed to Europe were stopped and confiscated by British authorities, the Nationalists, led by Zaghlūl, who signed himself Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly and President of the Egyptian Deputation, wrote to complain<sup>67</sup>. Following this, the Nationalists sent a series of telegrams to President Wilson and Lloyd George protesting against their treatment and presenting their demands for independence. Since all mail passed through British censorship, the British were aware of these telegrams. Although the Foreign Office took steps to assure that the United States did not answer the Nationalists, they allowed the messages to be sent<sup>68</sup>. Wingate, too, received numerous letters and statements concerning the Nationalists. With few exceptions this correspondence, even when written by Copts, upon whom the British had traditionally relied, was

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67 Zaghlūl to Minister of Interior and President of the Council of Ministers, November 23, 1918, FO141/773.

68 National petition to Wilson, October 24, 1918, FO371/3202; Members of National Committee to Lloyd George, November 20, 1918, SA170/3/3. Zaghlūl to Wilson, December 17, 1918, FO371/3204, forwarded to the Foreign Office with a question as to whether the telegrams were to be sent. Graham and Hardinge decided they should be relayed to Colonel House. On January 17, 1919, Graham wrote that the telegrams were becoming repetitious and should cease. Thus Zaghlūl's telegram to the United States Delegation in Paris, February 16, 1919, was stopped. FO371/3714. A similar procedure was followed concerning the telegrams to Clemenceau, FO371/3711; FO371/3714.

favourable to the Nationalist cause<sup>69</sup>.

Acting upon this information and upon past experience, Wingate wired the Foreign Office on November 25, 1918, to report again on Nationalist movements and the attempts to popularise their cause. After reiterating the various Nationalist supporters, ranging from Zaghlūl to Ṭūsūn, Wingate recommended that they be given permission to leave Egypt.

I still think it advisable that as soon as restrictions on travel are removed a hearing should be given in London to any Egyptian politicians who wish to address themselves directly to the Foreign Office. 70.

In concluding, Wingate described the growing nationalist sentiment in the schools, but reassured the Foreign Office that no public demonstrations were permitted. Rushdī had been warned by Wingate that demonstrations were considered seditious, and would be treated as such if they occurred. However, there is no indication that Zaghlūl or his followers considered employing force to secure their demands. Rather, they desired to work through peaceful channels and to negotiate openly with the British.

In a personal letter to Hardinge, written on November 24, Wingate repeated the request that the Nationalists be given travel permits. He explained that the Nationalists appeared to be split into three parties around Zaghlūl, Ṭūsūn, and Muḥammad Sa'īd. The latter group, headed by Muḥammad Sa'īd, was

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69 National Society in Egypt, November 22, 1918, SA170/3/4; an observer to Wingate, November 22, 1918, noted the growing unrest in Tanta. Unsigned note to the Residency, November 20, 1918. 'Abd Allāh Abaza, remarked in a conversation on November 20 that he opposed Zaghlūl, but supported the idea of negotiations. SA170/3/2.

70 Wingate to Foreign Office, November 25, 1918, SA170/3/4; FO141/773.

satisfied with the status quo. Actually, Sa'īd was closely involved with Ṭūsūn and, as previously noted, had been persuaded for a time to allow Zaghlūl to lead the fight against the British. Wingate did not attach enough importance to the fact, which he may not have realised, that Ṭūsūn had pledged himself to Zaghlūl, while Sa'īd was not strong enough to pose a serious threat to Zaghlūl's leadership. However, Wingate did realise that any delegation which went to London would have to be composed of members from all groups and could not exclude Zaghlūl; although, alternatively, he suggested that Rushdī and 'Adlī might be able to provide the necessary base of support among the Egyptians for the British to reach an enduring agreement<sup>71</sup>.

The long-awaited reply concerning permission for the Nationalists to leave Egypt was sent from the Foreign Office on November 27, 1918, and arrived in Cairo the next day<sup>72</sup>. This telegram informed Wingate that the British government was anxious to grant an increasing share of self-government to Egypt, but that the time for Egyptian autonomy had not yet arrived.

H.M.G. desire to act on principle which they have always followed of giving Egyptians an ever increasing share in the government of the Country... As you are well aware stage has not been reached at which self-government is possible. H.M.G. have not the intention of abandoning their responsibilities for ... good government in Egypt and for protecting rights and interests of both native and

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71 Ibid. Wingate to Hardinge, November 24, 1918, FO371/3204.

72 Foreign Office to Wingate, November 27, 1918, FO141/773.

of (sic: and other?) (? populations) <sup>73</sup> of the country.

No useful purpose would be served by allowing Nationalist leaders to come to London and advance immoderate demands ... H.M.G. would always be ready to listen ... to any reasonable proposals on the part of Ministers or other Egyptians and would welcome a visit from Ruchdi Pacha and Adly Pacha... although it may well be desirable to adopt an earlier suggestion of yours ... that Commission should visit Egypt and report before any reforms are decided. <sup>74</sup>

Rushdī and 'Adlī were to be informed that they were welcome at a later date, but that the time was not opportune for a visit during the Conference. Wingate and Cheetham drafted the letter to Rushdī which stressed the eagerness of the officials to meet with him at a more distant date. In reply to Zaghlūl, Wingate wrote that his request to leave Egypt had been refused, although he was welcome to address his complaints to the Residency <sup>75</sup>. When Zaghlūl received this reply, he wrote asking the reasons for the refusal. Symes answered on December 1 that Wingate could not consider the matter further, but that Zaghlūl was still allowed to submit suggestions <sup>76</sup>.

In the Foreign Office, the officials were less concerned over the effect their refusal to negotiate would have in Egypt than over Wingate's

73 Text appears as such in original after being decyphered. The sentence should probably read as follows: 'and for protecting rights and interests of both native and of other populations of the country'.

74 Ibid.

75 Wingate notes, November 29, 1918, SA170/3/3.

76 Wingate to Balfour, November 29, 1918, FO141/773. These letters are enclosed in this dispatch. Shafiq gives an account of this exchange as does Fahmī. Arabic sources stress the fact that Symes, a subordinate, wrote the second reply to Zaghlūl.



supposed weakness in dealing with the Nationalists. Graham wrote:

I confess that the only feature of this movement that causes me the least misgivings is the half-hearted attitude adopted by the Residency towards it. The Extremist leaders ought never to have been received by Sir R. Wingate, except for the purpose of being told not to make fools of themselves. 77

Crowe concurred, while adding that 'Sir R. Wingate seems deplorably weak at a moment when such weakness is calculated to create serious embarrassment for us at the Peace Conference.'<sup>78</sup>

In an attempt to correct Wingate's previous actions, Graham drafted a strongly worded telegram to the effect that he was to adopt a firmer attitude towards the Nationalists. Hardinge thought that this telegram would set Wingate back on the right line<sup>79</sup>. Graham's draft read:

I note extremist leaders are exploiting fact of your having received them at Residency. 80

To this sentence, Crowe added the words, 'which was unfortunate'<sup>81</sup>. This addendum remained in the copy sent to Wingate on December 2. In the telegram, Wingate was told that he was to inform the Egyptians that their agitation was viewed with disfavour, and to ascertain that Fu'äd and his ministers agreed with the British authorities. At a later date, Wingate was to take umbrage with the rebuke, but when the telegram was first received he was too busy attempting

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77 Graham minute on Wingate dispatch of November 29, 1918, FO371/3204.

78 Ibid., Crowe minute.

79 Ibid., Hardinge minute.

80 Draft telegram to Wingate, number 1463, FO371/3204.

81 Foreign Office to Wingate, December 2, 1918, FO371/3204.

to lessen the reaction caused by the refusal of the Foreign Office to talk with Zaghlūl or Rushdī to take notice.

After his request to travel to London was rejected, Rushdī submitted a note on Brunyate's constitution, in which he objected to the plan, because, in his view, it allowed for the annexation of Egypt, not for its independence. Simultaneously with his submission of the note, Rushdī resigned from the Ministry. In his letter of resignation, Rushdī explained that the refusal to permit Egyptians to discuss their status in London had forced him to conclude that he could no longer act as Prime Minister. 'Adlī followed Rushdī and submitted his resignation. When the two ministers resigned on December 2, Wingate met with Fu'ād to explain the seriousness of the situation. Fu'ād reported that the nationalistic effervescence would increase, while Wingate maintained it had been artificially engineered<sup>82</sup>. On December 4, Wingate saw Fu'ād and Rushdī, who reaffirmed his determination to resign in spite of pleas from Wingate. Wingate advised Fu'ād to delay his acceptance of Rushdī's resignation in hopes that Rushdī could be persuaded to remain as Prime Minister<sup>83</sup>.

Rushdī's resignation precipitated a series of interviews between leading pro-British Egyptians and British officials. These interviews had one goal - to persuade Rushdī to withdraw his resignation. In the course of these interviews

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82 Wingate to Balfour, December 5, 1918, FO141/773. Enclosures include Rushdī's resignation and his note on Brunyate's proposals.

83 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 4, 1918, SA171/1; FO141/773.

complaints concerning lax Inspectors, untrustworthy mudīrs, and abuses caused by the military demands during the War were expressed<sup>84</sup>. These factors contributed to the eagerness with which all classes of Egyptians lent their support to the Nationalist programme. When talking with 'Adlī, Wingate was informed that Zaghlūl did not expect to receive all of his demands, but felt he had to ask for the maximum<sup>85</sup>. However, the interviews did not succeed in changing the situation. After Rushdī persisted in resigning, Haines remarked that the British had 'lost a really good Prime Minister for just - nothing at all.'<sup>86</sup>

Meanwhile, Wingate had wired the Foreign Office for further instructions. Graham stated that the resignations were not significant, since the problem was actually Wingate's inability to manage Fu'ād<sup>87</sup>. At this juncture, Graham was attempting to place the blame for the Nationalist fervour upon Wingate. Actually, there is no evidence that Fu'ād wanted Rushdī to resign, or that he would have adopted a stronger position against the Nationalists had he been on better terms with Wingate or the ministers.

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84 Note on Wingate interview with Ṭulba Sa'ūdī, December 5, 1918, SA171/1. Note on Douglas Dunlop (Adviser to the Ministry of Education) conversation with 'Adlī, December 4, 1918; enclosed in Wingate dispatch to Foreign Office on December 5, 1918, FO141/773.

85 Note on Wingate's conversation with 'Adlī, December 9, 1918, FO141/773.

86 Note on Haines conversation with Rushdī, December 8, 1918, FO141/773.

87 Graham minute, number 1810, FO371/3204. Later Graham wrote to Storrs, May 27, 1920, that Fu'ād could have been managed, but for Wingate who 'could not make up his own mind on any subject and was therefore unlikely to be able to make up Fuad's for him.' Storrs Papers, III/2.

While Graham, within the Foreign Office, minimised the troubles in Egypt, he suggested privately to Hardinge that some concession could be made to the ministers<sup>88</sup>. He wrote on this point to Wingate on December 5.

The authorities here were filled with horror at the idea of having to tackle the question of Egyptian reforms at this moment. In fact they utterly refused to contemplate the idea at all and even Ruchdi and Adly will have to possess their souls in patience, although there is every intention to give them a hearing when the proper moment arrives. 89

Although British officials were tremendously busy with the details of the Conference, they might have been more willing to listen to Wingate's warnings had Graham not repeatedly stated that trouble in Egypt was unlikely.

In Cairo, Wingate and his staff continued their attempts to persuade Rushdī and 'Adlī to reconsider. Other members of the Ministry, Sirrī Pasha and Wahba, tried to convince them to change their minds, but to no avail<sup>90</sup>. Rushdī was convinced that the British government had lost faith in him, nor could he remain Prime Minister when the majority of the politicians were demanding independence, a question which the British refused to discuss. Wingate was certain that this situation had developed during the War when no attempts had been made to initiate reforms<sup>91</sup>.

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88 Hardinge minute, number 1810, FO371/3204.

89 Graham to Wingate, December 5, 1918, SA171/1.

90 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 5, 1918, Wingate note on interview with Sirrī Pasha, FO141/773. Wingate to Hardinge, December 7, 1918, enclosed note on interview with Tulba on December 5. HP, Vol. IV (30), 1918.

91 Wingate to Hardinge, December 7, 1918, HP, Vol. IV (30), 1918; SA237/10.

In his letter to Hardinge on December 7, Wingate complained about the Foreign Office reprimand in the telegram of December 2. Wingate felt it had been unfair, since he had always made a policy of seeing Egyptian leaders when they requested an interview.

Apart from the fact that I had no precise information as to the object of their visit until we actually got down to business, I hold, in the strongest manner, the view that the High Commissioner should be accessible to all and sundry ... If it is really the view of H.M.G. that I should not see representatives of all shades and opinions at the Residency, I feel that I ought not to be here, for my conception of how best to serve my country in my present position is to act as I have done hitherto. 92

To explain Crowe's addition, Graham wrote that the rebuke did not imply that Wingate should not see native deputations, but that the authorities in London were primarily concerned over the apparent collusion of Fu'ād and his ministers against the British<sup>93</sup>. He added that he was certain that Wingate, owing to faulty staff-work, had been unaware of Zaghlūl's intentions. Actually, as previously noted<sup>94</sup>, Wingate did know that Zaghlūl was liable to make demands for more independence, but when he saw Zaghlūl he had no suspicion that the Foreign Office would refuse to receive the Nationalists.

In offering to submit his resignation if the British Government was no longer pleased with his work, Wingate emphasised his belief that he had acted in the best interests of Great Britain. In a private undated note to himself, Wingate

92 Ibid.

93 Graham to Wingate, n.d. (probably written in late December or early January), SA171/1.

94 Above, Chapter VI, p.p. 159-60.

remarked that not even his staff had known he had submitted this offer to resign to Hardinge<sup>95</sup>. However, Wingate's 'resignation' was in no manner an official one, and was not couched in particularly strong terms. Wingate was apparently satisfied with Graham's reassurance that the Foreign Office placed every confidence in his work and looked forward to seeing him in the near future to discuss the Egyptian problem<sup>96</sup>.

Despite British arguments, Rushdī refused to withdraw his resignation, and the Egyptian government continued without Prime Minister. British officials had by this time gathered together a fairly complete list of the Egyptian Nationalists and their affiliations. That the lists included names of some government officials caused alarm in the Foreign Office, which promptly ordered that these men should be warned that their activities endangered their jobs<sup>97</sup>. To minimise Nationalist reactions, Wingate, acting on Brunyate's suggestion, proposed that the British should issue a declaration of intent. This idea was vetoed by the Foreign Office, especially by Graham, who felt that Brunyate merely wanted approval for his programme<sup>98</sup>. The Foreign Office was anxious to prevent, at all costs, a discussion of the legal status of Egypt at the Peace Conference. Since most of the Allied powers had already accepted the Protectorate over Egypt, only the Central Powers remained, and they were

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95 Wingate note, n.d. SA174/3.

96 Graham to Wingate, n.d. SA171/1.

97 These lists were sent to Balfour on December 8, 1918. Foreign Office to Wingate, January 3, 1919, FO371/3204.

98 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 11, 1918, Graham minute FO371/3204.

to be required to do so at the Conference<sup>99</sup>. As Balfour and his staff were to attend the Conference, at which the Egyptian Nationalists were definitely not welcome, the Foreign Office saw no reason for the delegation to leave Egypt. This viewpoint seemed logical in London, but in Egypt where feeling was beginning to intensify, the matter was more difficult to explain.

In a conversation with Fu'ād on December 12, Wingate was informed that the Egyptians had expected strong foreign support for independence. The refusal of Great Britain to consider the question had come as a great shock to the Nationalists. Fu'ād offered to talk with Rushdī in order to stress the willingness of Britain to enter discussions after the Conference. Rushdī argued that Egyptians wanted immediate negotiations, and would consider him a traitor if he agreed to a delay. For 'reasons of conscience', he was compelled to resign; he was supported by 'Adlī<sup>100</sup>. Faced with the intransigent attitude of the ministers, Wingate was forced to recommend that their resignations be accepted. He noted that he 'fully appreciated the undesirability of a serious crisis in Egyptian affairs at this juncture,<sup>101</sup> but that it had been impossible

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99 Foreign Office to Wingate, December 11, 1918, FO141/773.

100 Wingate talk with Fu'ād, December 12, 1918, summarised to Balfour, December 14, 1918, FO141/773. Graham wrote to Rushdī, December 13, 1918, SA170/1. Wingate note on interview with Rushdī, December 13, 1918, SA171/1. Brunyate note on conversations with 'Adlī and Tharwat on December 13, 1918. Submitted December 15, 1918, SA171/1. 'Adlī firmly supported Rushdī and demanded negotiations begin at once.

101 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 18, 1918, FO141/773. Wingate to Balfour, December 18, 1918, FO141/773.

to find an acceptable solution. Wingate frankly stated that Rushdī had been forced to resign because he could not withstand the growing Egyptian nationalism.

Even this blunt statement on the popularity of the Egyptian Nationalists failed to awaken the officials in London to the danger it presented. Graham was convinced that after Fu'ād and his ministers came to London, the Foreign Office could easily persuade them that they had acted foolishly<sup>102</sup>. What Graham failed, or refused, to recognise was that Nationalist fervour had spread beyond a few relatively unimportant Egyptian politicians, and had begun to appeal to all levels of the society. The extent of this failure to understand is revealed in a Foreign Office memorandum on Egyptian leaders, in which Zaghlūl was described as leading a national party, hostile to the British and lacking any support from the fellāḥin.<sup>103</sup> Graham added that Zaghlūl was 'generally regarded by the better informed Egyptian opinion as a discredited adventurer who is playing for his own hand.'<sup>104</sup> Graham based his analysis on the current situation on his earlier experience in Egypt; he drew parallels and comparisons which were faulty in the post-War context. Aware of the Foreign Office error, Wingate continued to advocate the publication of a declaration of intent and the dispatch of a commission to investigate the Egyptian situation<sup>105</sup>.

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102 Graham minute on Wingate dispatch to Foreign Office on December 18, 1918, FO371/3204.

103 Memorandum on Zaghlūl, December 22, 1918, FO371/3204.

104 Ibid. A similar report was attached to the Eastern report XCIX, December 19, 1918, FO371/3204.

105 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 18, 1918. Graham maintained that the Sultan could not issue a declaration, and that the entire trouble



When these suggestions were rejected, Wingate recommended that Rushdī and 'Adlī should proceed to London, but be delayed in Paris for a few weeks.

Wingate admitted that the scheme, which had been conceived by Sirrī, had its faults, but that it would help the ministers to save face<sup>106</sup>. After receiving this dispatch, Graham drafted a telegram in which the possibility of Rushdī arriving in February was considered. This was cancelled by Robert Cecil. Instead, the Foreign Office wired that a delay in Cairo might make the ministers reconsider<sup>107</sup>.

Wingate told the Foreign Office that the demands for independence represented a different force, not merely a revival of the old nationalist feelings. He connected Egyptian nationalism with the developments caused by the War and the Arab revolt, which had been encouraged by the British<sup>108</sup>. His plea that the Nationalists should be permitted to leave Egypt was based on the following:

If a deputation from the Extremists is permitted to take passage by the Military Authorities, it is not necessary for Mr. Balfour to see them unless he so desires, but my own view is, as I stated, that more good than harm may result from a straight talk with them at home - They know that Indian "reformers" are allowed to go to London and to

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had begun with the interview of November 13. Graham minute on Wingate dispatch of December 23, 1918, FO371/3204.

- 106 Wingate to Graham, December 22, 1918, SA171/1. Wingate to Foreign Office, December 23, 1918, FO141/773.
- 107 Draft telegram, number 1595, cancelled. FO371/3204. Foreign Office to Wingate, December 23, 1918, FO141/773.
- 108 Wingate to Foreign Office, December 26, 1918, FO141/773.

be interviewed and they think themselves superior to the latter. 109

In a private letter to Graham, Wingate remarked that he was prepared to travel to London, but stipulated that he should proceed before the Nationalists, who, he recommended, should be detained in Paris for a few days, so that he might talk with Hardinge and Graham before they arrived in London<sup>110</sup>.

On December 30, Fu'ād told Wingate that he was making every effort to convince Rushdī and 'Adlī that the High Commissioner was doing everything possible to obtain the acceptance of their resignations. If they were not satisfied, Fu'ād told them to go directly to the Residency. Understandably, the two men were becoming impatient that their resignations had been held in abeyance for three weeks. Actually, Wingate was striving for the early grant by the British Government of permission for the two ministers to proceed to London. He thought that if he could obtain that permission, Rushdī would reconsider. On December 31, the Foreign Office wired that it would accept the two ministers in February, but they were not, under any circumstances, to stop in Paris. Wingate was further directed to reassure the ministers that no steps concerning Brunyate's proposed constitution would be taken without consultation<sup>111</sup>.

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109 Wingate to Hardinge, December 28, 1918, SA237/10; HP, Vol. IV (39), 1918.

110 Wingate to Graham, December 29, 1918, SA237/10.

111 Foreign Office to Wingate, December 31, 1918, sent January 1, 1919, and received January 2, 1919, FO371/3204; SA172/3.

On January 2, 1919, the Foreign Office received Wingate's dispatch urging a decision on the ministers' resignations. For the first time, Curzon minuted an Egyptian dispatch. After Balfour's departure for Paris, Curzon took control of the Foreign Office, and immediately sought to bring himself up to date on all problems. Not the least of these was the Egyptian question. Curzon asked for a complete history of the Egyptian situation, while Graham remarked that there was a large file ready for his perusal<sup>112</sup>. Curzon's remark reveals that he had not been acting previously in Egyptian affairs, and that Graham alone had been responsible for whatever decisions had been taken prior to the end of December 1918. Graham formulated policy, then passed it to Hardinge, who faithfully concurred. There are no indications that Balfour did anything but accept the advice of Hardinge and Graham.

Wingate's projected journey to London to discuss the Nationalist problem received more attention during the first week in January 1919. As early as the first of January, officials in the Foreign Office were thinking in terms of Wingate's dismissal, not his temporary absence. Cecil wrote to Balfour on January 4, 1919, that he had requested Wingate to come to London.

Before sending it [telegram to Wingate] I spoke to the P.M. and suggested that if Wingate was recalled home Allenby would be a suitable successor. This he warmly approved ... But the P.M. wanted nothing done which would preclude Wingate's return to Egypt if that were decided on ... But I ought to add that everyone to whom I have spoken about W. is confident that he is not up to the job. 113

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112 Wingate to Balfour, January 1, 1919, Graham and Curzon minutes, FO371/3711.

113 Cecil to Balfour, January 4, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/215.

Cecil's telegram to Wingate told him to arrive in London before conversations with the Nationalists were held, probably in mid-February<sup>114</sup>. Cecil's letter to Balfour clearly indicated that he did not expect Wingate to return to Egypt; he had even chosen the likely successor for Wingate - Allenby.

Wingate remained ignorant of the men in London who objected to his return to Cairo as High Commissioner. In fact, his correspondence during this time shows that, although he recognised the seriousness of the situation, he was optimistic<sup>115</sup>. He informed the Foreign Office that the popularity of the Nationalists was growing, as their call for independence appealed to the fellāḥin, who had suffered during the War. Wingate noted that the movement also had support from the educated classes<sup>116</sup>. On January 14, Wingate told Rushdī and 'Adlī that they could begin to make travel plans, and formulate their demands for discussions with Balfour. Wingate told the men that he had received instructions to go to London and would be leaving on January 21<sup>117</sup>. Following this, Cheetham and Brunyate were informed of the plans<sup>118</sup>. By failing to inform members of his staff of the impending departure directly after

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114 Balfour to Wingate, January 4, 1919, written by Cecil. Balfour Papers, FO800/215.

115 Wingate to C.E. Wilson, January 9, 1919, FO141/813.

116 Wingate to Balfour, January 5, 1919, FO371/3711. Dunlop wrote on the student support for the Nationalists on January 7, 1919. SA172/1.

117 Wingate notes for conversation with Rushdī, January 11, 1919, FO141/773; SA172/1.

118 Wingate to Curzon, January 16, 1919, FO141/773; FO371/3711.

he heard of it, Wingate further alienated officials who already doubted his capabilities<sup>119</sup>.

Confident that he could persuade the Foreign Office that the Nationalists should be received in London, Wingate impressed upon Rushdī the importance of not telling Zaghlūl and his followers of the impending departure of the High Commissioner. Wingate told Rushdī that when the travel embargo was removed, Cheetham would arrange with the military authorities for the passports<sup>120</sup>. If Wingate had not been certain that he could convince the Foreign Office to change its stand, he would not have encouraged Rushdī in this manner. Unfortunately, officials in the Foreign Office were becoming more obdurate against the Nationalists, as A.T. Loyd's minute of January 30 indicates.

I gather that S. Z. holds the field, the Sultan says that the Extremists will only take the answer from H.M.G.: the position of the Ministers in the eyes of the Extremists must not be weakened: the Ministers will not come to England unless the Extremists are allowed to come too: the Ministers lay stress upon the importance of conciliating the nationalist party - It is all to be fought out in London -

There are objections to such a course but it may yet prove to be the best solution - to deport S. Z. and Ismail Sidky from Egypt. 121.

Graham concurred with this view, because he remained convinced that there was no point in Zaghlūl travelling to London.<sup>122</sup>

119 Herbert diary, January 9, 1919, PPC. At this time the staff knew Wingate planned to leave, but had not been officially informed of it.

120 Wingate to Curzon, January 16, 1919, FO371/3711.

121 A.T. Loyd minute on Wingate dispatch of January 16, 1919, written on January 30, 1919, FO371/3711.

122 Ibid.

Meanwhile, Wingate was making preparations to return to London for the first time since 1914. Allenby heard of the plans, and wrote that he was glad Wingate had the opportunity to discuss the problem in London; he added that he saw eye to eye with Wingate on all Egyptian matters<sup>123</sup>. Wingate, accompanied by his wife, Symes, and Mervyn Herbert, left Cairo on January 21. Before departing, he wrote a note for the Nationalists and the ministers, to the effect that he was going to London, and that, in his absence, which was not to be prolonged, Milne Cheetham would act as High Commissioner<sup>124</sup>. Wingate planned to stop in Paris to see Lloyd George, Balfour, and Hardinge, before proceeding to London.

The day after Wingate left Egypt, Graham wrote to Hardinge to explain the history of the Egyptian problem. Graham based this account on a verbal message from Cheetham, which had been delivered by Burnett-Stuart, formerly in the Ministry of the Interior and a close friend of Graham's. According to Graham, Wingate had used the highly irregular method of private interviews with the Nationalists in an attempt to halt their growing influence<sup>125</sup>. He advised Hardinge to refuse the request of the Nationalists to leave Egypt, because the Foreign Office had no intention whatsoever of dealing with them.

It would surely be better to tell them that their movement is frankly seditious, that we will have nothing to say to it or them, and that we shall not facilitate their journey to Europe in any way. 126

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123 Allenby to Wingate, January 15, 1919, SA172/1.

124 al-Ahrām, al-Muqattam, January 22, 1919. Wingate note on departure, January 21, 1919, SA162/1. Repeated to Khartoum and Jeddah, FO141/757.

125 Above, Chapter VI, p.

126 Graham to Hardinge, January 22, 1919, HP, Vol. II (40), 1919.

Graham predicted that the ministers would resign, but that it was better to face the problem squarely, since the ministers, once they realised their folly, would reconsider.

Hardinge showed this letter, in which Wingate's entire policy was criticised, to Balfour. In reply to Graham, Hardinge noted that the autumn events in Cairo presented:

... a curious mixture of weakness and a love of doing things behind other people's backs. I am quite certain you are right in considering that the position ought to be faced squarely and that the movement should be treated as seditious.

When Ministers do come we should be frank and give them "a good dressing-down". That is really what they want before we can listen to any schemes of progressive development in Egypt. No doubt some progress must be made in Egypt, but it should be on steady lines, not on the lines now advocated for India, which in my opinion constitute too big a jump all at once. If Wingate comes to see me on his way through Paris you may be quite sure that I shall speak perfectly frankly to him in practically the same sense as you have written to me. 127

Thus the officials in Paris and London had made up their minds long before Wingate had the opportunity to discuss personally with them. Although Wingate certainly did not envisage an acceptance of the programme for complete independence (he had staunchly supported annexation), he recognised that the climate of Egyptian opinion in 1918 demanded that some concessions be made, and that, if properly handled, the Nationalist group headed by Zaghlūl would not be intractable, but could be persuaded to work with the British along moderate lines.

CHAPTER VII  
WINGATE SUPERSEDED AS HIGH COMMISSIONER

Following his arrival in Paris on January 20, Wingate saw Hardinge, A.J. Balfour, Robert Cecil, and Eyre Crowe. Wingate spoke with Lloyd George and Philip Kerr on February 1, at which time he explained the critical situation in Egypt. During these interviews, Wingate was not given any indication of British policy with regard to Egypt, but was referred to the Foreign Office where policy was supposedly made<sup>1</sup>. It should be remembered that Hardinge, Cecil, and Crowe were ill-disposed to Wingate's viewpoint, while Lloyd George had been informed by Cecil that Wingate was not a suitable High Commissioner<sup>2</sup>. That the men in Paris did not advocate Wingate's policy of negotiation with the Nationalists - even after he had talked personally with them - implied that he had failed to convince them of his case. Wingate, however, seemed unaware of his failure; having presented the problem in Paris, he left to discuss the matter in London, where he arrived on February 3. Once in London, Wingate promptly went to the Foreign Office where he expected to meet Lord Curzon who was directing British policy concerning Egypt. To Wingate's surprise, Curzon was not immediately available; indeed, two weeks

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1 Wingate to Cheetham, February 1, 1919, SA237/1. Wingate note on his visit to Paris and on the Egyptian situation, August 31, 1919, SA217/8.

2 Above, Chapter V, p. 188.



were to elapse before he was permitted to see him.

In the interim, the situation in Egypt continued to become more volatile. Wingate recognised that time was a critical factor, but found it impossible to convince the Foreign Office, because Cheetham, the Acting High Commissioner, continued to send dispatches describing the Egyptian political situation in optimistic terms. Cheetham wrote that he did not think that trouble would arise in the near future, since the popularity of the Nationalists appeared to be diminishing. Cheetham gave this analysis, although he had been informed that the Nationalists planned large demonstrations to mark the anniversary of the death of the Nationalist leader, Muṣṭafā Kāmil<sup>3</sup>. In addition, the United States military mission in Egypt predicted that armed disturbances were imminent<sup>4</sup>, although the United States representative in Egypt tempered the warning with a report which concluded that uprisings were unlikely. In the Foreign Office, the prediction was dismissed with the remark:

... the American Military authorities imagine Egypt is "seething" when in reality she is only "teething". 5

Actually, the Nationalists had been far more successful in their attempts to gain support among the Egyptians than the British officials expected. The

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3 Acting High Commissioner (Cheetham) to Foreign Office, February 3, 1919, number 182, FO141/773.

4 Cheetham to Foreign Office, February 3, 1919, number 184, FO371/3711.

5 Ibid., Graham minute.

gathering of 600 Egyptians at Muṣṭafā Kāmil's tomb on February 11 revealed that groups of Egyptians other than the members of al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī had become involved in the struggle for national independence. It was not, as British officials reported, a sign of the demise of Zaghlūl's power<sup>6</sup>.

Rather, Zaghlūl's control over the Egyptians who wished independence had steadily strengthened since the formation of the delegation, and the creation of its programme on November 23. As previously noted, Zaghlūl had requested permission to leave Egypt on November 20 and again on November 23. After these requests were refused, Zaghlūl and his supporters continued their struggle for recognition through a series of telegrams presenting their case to the United States, France, and Great Britain<sup>7</sup>. On January 14, a group of 150 leading Egyptians gathered at Ḥamad al-Bāsil's home to hear Zaghlūl speak. At this time, Zaghlūl called for constitutional government and remarked that:

The occupation, which had no right to remain in Egypt, was changed into a Protectorate by the mere wish of the English and without the agreement of Egypt. The Protectorate is contrary to international law and dramatically opposed to the new principles [sic] by which humanity has been delivered from this terrible war. 8

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6 Cheetham to Foreign Office, February 16, 1919, number 78, FO371/3714.

7 Above, Chapter VI, p. 174.

8 Note by Keown-Boyd on party at Ḥamad al-Bāsil's home, written on January 16, 1919, SA172/1; FO141/810.

By this time, Zaghlūl's home had become known as Bayt al-Umma (House of the Nation), and was the centre for meetings of Egyptian leaders<sup>9</sup>. On January 20, Zaghlūl travelled to Asyūt where he was well received<sup>10</sup>. Formerly Minister of Education, he was both well known and well liked among the students, and was, therefore, able to enlist their support for the cause. These activities indicate that he was making a concerted effort to gain wide-spread support for the wafd. Nor were Zaghlūl and his followers merely content to make their programme known throughout the countryside. They organised wafd adherents in villages and towns into councils with presidents, which were closely linked with the central organisation in Cairo. Al-Azhar acted as the central headquarters, where students were delegated special tasks, and where meetings occurred daily. Through this system the wafd was later able to arrange strikes and boycotts; the system also proved to be effective for the collection of funds to maintain the wafd in Paris, and to pay subsidies to striking workers<sup>11</sup>. The well planned and co-ordinated demonstrations, which began after Zaghlūl was deported, and which continued intermittently throughout 1919, attest both to

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9. Fahmī, p. 82. 'Al-Umma' is the Koranic word for people and came to mean the community of believers. The word gradually evolved in meaning until it was applied to the nation and the people who inhabited it.

10. Intelligence reports, January 20, 1919, FO141/810.

11. Intelligence reports by C.F. Ryder, April 17 and April 18, 1919. FO141/780. Ryder termed the councils or cells in the provinces, 'Soviets', which should not be confused with the Bolshevik system, although officials in London periodically worried lest the Nationalists join the Bolsheviks. For more on the organisation of the wafd supporters in Egypt see: al-Rāfi'ī, pp. 150-52; Anīs, whose book is a collection of letters by 'Abd al-Rahmān Fahmī, who organised most of the strikes and who wrote regularly to

the efficiency of the organisation, and to its hold on the masses of the Egyptian people.

That the leaders of the wafd were able to gain support from the Egyptians was due, at least in part, to the fact that the people were dissatisfied with the economic situation in Egypt, while holding various grievances against the British civilian and military administrators who had requisitioned men and materials during the War. These grievances are clearly reflected in the Egyptian press during the winter of 1919<sup>12</sup>.

On the other hand, British officials in Egypt underestimated both the ability of the Nationalists to coalesce their supporters and the extent of the discontent among the fellahin. Cheetham expected the Foreign Office would be persuaded to see Rushdī and others, and, for this reason, was probably inclined to minimise the power of the Nationalists. Acting on the belief that Rushdī would be received in London, Cheetham wired the British Commander-in-Chief in Egypt to reserve places on a ship bound for Europe at an indefinite date in the near future for the Egyptian ministers<sup>13</sup>. He also asked the

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Zaghlūl. At a later date, secret societies, many of which had tenuous connections with the wafd, developed. Members of these groups led strikes and engaged in some terrorism. Intelligence report, November 5, 1919, FO371/3720.

(21) al-Ahrām, Wādī' l-Nīl, al-Waṭan, and al-Ahālī. These newspapers contain numerous articles on the need for reorganisation of the administration, educational and economic systems. The Peace Conference and the Fourteen Points were also discussed.

13 Cheetham to C-in-C, February 3, 1919, FO141/773.

Foreign Office when a reply could be expected concerning the departure of the Egyptians<sup>14</sup>. The Foreign Office answered that the question was under consideration with Wingate, and that the decision would be communicated shortly to Cairo<sup>15</sup>.

When this telegram was sent, Wingate had not yet seen Curzon. Realising that time was essential, Wingate wrote to Graham on February 7 to say that he was anxious to talk with Curzon at the earliest possible moment<sup>16</sup>. The longer that the Sultan and the ministers were forced to wait, the more likely an outbreak of Nationalist agitation became. With this in mind, Wingate wrote to Cheetham that the men in Paris appeared to support the plan for the Egyptian ministers to come to London, although Curzon had not considered the problem. Wingate's optimism was qualified by his comment on Curzon.

...The whole matter now rests with Lord Curzon and I believe he has not yet had time even to peruse the somewhat bulky dossier on the subject - I am told that he never will discuss complicated matters of this sort unless he has fully mastered the details on paper. I am at the Foreign Office nearly every day and am making every effort imaginable, but so far without success. 17

Finally, on February 14, the Foreign Office informed Wingate that Curzon would be 'delighted' to see him on February 17<sup>18</sup>.

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14 Cheetham to Foreign Office, February 6, 1919, FO371/3711.

15 Graham drafted the reply on February 10, but the telegram was not sent until February 13, 1919, FO371/3711; FO141/773.

16 Wingate to Graham, February 7, 1919, SA172/4.

17 Wingate to Cheetham, February 13, 1919, SA172/4.

18 Foreign Office to Wingate, February 14, 1919, SA172/4.

During the week of February 14, Cheetham minimised the difficulties in Egypt, although he was forced to report the demonstration at Muṣṭafā Kāmil's tomb (at which some students were arrested) and the meetings which had been held at al-Azhar. Graham remarked that the developments seemed 'trivial'.<sup>19</sup> In view of these optimistic reports, Curzon was unlikely to regard seriously Wingate's warnings. At the meeting on February 17 with Curzon, Wingate repeated his request that the Egyptians wishing to travel to London should be allowed to do so. He predicted that if the recommendation was rejected, the 'Nationalists would almost certainly intimidate the Sultan and so terrorise prospective Ministers that it would be impossible to form a new Ministry.'<sup>20</sup> Unimpressed by Wingate's caution, Curzon maintained that the advice was incompatible with the wishes of the government, and that Great Britain refused to allow the Nationalists to 'hold a pistol'<sup>21</sup> to its head. Nonetheless, Wingate submitted to Curzon for Balfour's approval a draft telegram which stated that the Egyptians would be permitted to leave<sup>22</sup>.

Curzon subsequently sent to Balfour Wingate's telegram, along with

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- 19 Cheetham to Curzon, February 16, 1919, Graham minute. Curzon's initials do not appear on this dispatch. FO371/3714.
- 20 Wingate notes on the political situation in Egypt, 1918-1920, SA151/8.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Wingate draft telegram, February 17, 1919. The telegram read: 'I shall be glad to see Ruchdi and Adly Pasha in London and to hear their views on Egyptian questions as soon as it is convenient for them to come to England. Sir Reginald Wingate has explained their anxiety that members of the Extremist Party should not now be prevented from leaving Egypt. The extravagant opinions apparently held by this party preclude any possibility of its members being represented here officially or being regarded as an Egyptian delegation but I have no objection to your exercising discretion in granting permits to leave Egypt to such

his own, which advocated that the Nationalists should not be permitted to come to London. Balfour's papers do not contain Curzon's private letter on the matter. Since Curzon did not keep copies of his correspondence it is unlikely that the letter will be found in his papers when they are opened for public viewing. One may therefore only surmise that the officials in Paris acted upon Curzon's recommendation that Wingate's advice should be ignored. They had heard Wingate's interpretation of the situation, but had been strongly warned by Hardinge, acting on Graham's advice, and by Curzon, that Wingate was mistaken. Wingate's capabilities had been questioned by politicians of the stature of Robert Cecil, who had frankly suggested that Allenby should replace Wingate. With a prominent array of high officials acting against him, Wingate stood little chance of securing his requests. He did not, however, seem aware at this time that Hardinge and Graham also opposed him. He attributed his difficulties in gaining a hearing to the vast amount of work with which the men in London and Paris had to deal<sup>23</sup>.

After Wingate's interview with Curzon, the Foreign Office received a communique from Cairo which reported that the political scene was improving. On February 27, 1919 Cheetham wired:

The agitation which they [the Nationalists] have organised is dying out or is at any rate quiescent in the country at large. A noteworthy feature is that this agitation has from the beginning been entirely pacific in character.

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Egyptian politicians as may apply as private individuals for same.'  
SA162/2.

23 Wingate to R. Greg, February 18, 1919; Wingate to Stack, February 18, 1919, SA172/4.

The present movement, however, cannot be compared in importance with that of Mustapha Kamel and there seems no reason why it should affect the decisions of His Majesty's Government on Constitutional questions and the proper form to be given to the Protectorate. 24

This dispatch confirmed Graham's opinion that time was working in favour of Great Britain. He thought that any political crisis which might ensue would be less serious than if it had occurred in December<sup>25</sup>. Curzon agreed entirely with Graham's estimate. Acting on this information - not on Wingate's warnings - the Foreign Office cabled Egypt on February 26, 1919, that the matter of travel permits for those Egyptians who requested them had been carefully considered, in cooperation with Wingate.

It must however be remembered that these Nationalist Leaders who with possible exception of Aziz Bey Fehmi appear to be men of doubtful standing and antecedents have openly placed themselves at the head of a disloyal movement to sever connection between Egypt and the Protecting Power and have in furtherance of their aims organised an agitation throughout the country causing petitions to be signed and subscriptions to be raised in support of it. In the circumstances to facilitate their journey to England I shall be relaxing existing restrictions on travelling [sic] or to go further by receiving them at the Foreign Office if they came would imply a measure of countenance and recognition to which they are certainly not entitled and of which if conceded they would be likely to make the same illegitimate use they did of their original reception at The Residency...H.M.G. therefore adhere to the attitude which they had previously adopted on this question.

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24 Cheetham to Foreign Office, February 24, 1919, number 294, FO371/3711.

25 Ibid., Graham minute.



You should now inform the Sultan and Ministers that H.M.G. renew their invitation to Rushdi Pasha and Adly Pasha or to any Minister or Ministers deputed by His Highness... They will receive a cordial welcome and full and sympathetic consideration will be granted to any representations or proposals they may desire to submit both in regard to the future relations between Egypt and the Protecting Power and to Egyptian Internal Reforms. 26

In a private telegram, Graham, who had written the official dispatch, told Cheetham to avoid a political crisis if possible. After hearing that their requests for Zaghlūl and his supporters to leave Egypt had been rejected, Rushdī and 'Adlī once again submitted their resignations. Cheetham immediately wired London that the crisis was inevitable<sup>27</sup>.

During the ensuing weeks, Fu'ād supported the British administrators and even offered to help form a new Ministry. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥamīd asserts that Fu'ād was willing to aid the British because he felt Zaghlūl had split the country by refusing to allow Rushdī and 'Adlī to represent the nation<sup>28</sup>. Fu'ād's willingness to help met with Graham's satisfaction, for he was convinced that a new Ministry could be formed<sup>29</sup>. When Curzon heard of the new developments, he remarked, 'So far so good.'<sup>30</sup>

Knowing that Rushdī could not be persuaded to reconsider, Fu'ād accepted his resignation on March 2, after which he met with Wahba, Tharwat,

26 Foreign Office to Cheetham, February 26, 1919, number 268, FO371/3711.

27 Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 1, 1919, FO371/3711.

28 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, p. 102.

29 Graham minute on Cheetham's dispatch of March 1, 1919, written on March 3, 1919, FO371/3711.

30 Ibid., Curzon minute.

and Sirrī, in an attempt to form a new Ministry. These men hesitated, since a new Ministry would lack support from Egyptian ruling classes and the leading politicians. Fu'ād's acceptance of Rushdī's resignation was greeted with regret by the Egyptian press and by the members of the delegation. The wafd publicly denounced the acceptance of the resignation: their displeasure may have derived in part from their desire to keep Rushdī's Ministry in office, but without the ability to act<sup>31</sup>.

On March 2, Fu'ād received a petition signed by 15 Nationalists, led by Zaghlūl and Sha'rāwī, in which the case for independence was presented, and demands issued for permission to place the matter before the Peace Conference. The petitioners concluded that Rushdī and 'Adlī had resigned in order to demonstrate their disapproval at the repeated denial of Nationalist requests.

Le peuple était convaincu que si Votre Hautesse s'est trouvée obligée peut-être, pour les considérations dynastiques, d'accepter le trône de Votre ... Père, devenu vacant par la mort de Votre Frère, le Sultan Hussein, cette acceptation sous le régime d'un protectorat provisoire est nul en droit, ne pouvait avoir pour effet de vous détourner de travailler pour l'indépendance de Votre pays. 32

After reading this petition, which was more firmly worded than previous Nationalist communiqués, Cheetham wrote to the Foreign Office that it was 'a deliberate

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31 al-Ahrām, al-Umma, al-Mahrūsa.

32 Petition to Sultan Fu'ād, March 2, 1919, translated to French, enclosed in Cheetham's dispatch to Foreign Office, March 5, 1919, FO371/3714.

attempt to intimidate Sultan Fuad and deter him from using his influence.'<sup>33</sup>  
 It now became obvious, even to Cheetham, that the Nationalists were tired of waiting, and were about to take more active steps to realise their demands. They were using all their available resources to ensure that a new Ministry was not formed.

Finally awakened to the dangers represented by the Nationalists under Zaghlūl's leadership, the British quickly adopted a firmer attitude. For this reason, Cheetham ordered the Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in Egypt, General H.D. Watson, to inform the Committee of 14 that it was obstructing governmental procedures, an offence which, under martial law, was liable to severe punishment. Cheetham told the Foreign Office of his order, but added that the Nationalists could not be expected to desist from their agitation. After consulting with British advisers, probably Brunyate and Haines, Cheetham recommended the internment of Zaghlūl in India or Ceylon.

Saad has long ceased to listen to reason and spends his time in gambling. His movement has reached a point at which it must resort to more violent methods in order to retain its hold on intelligentsia, and moderates and more sensible Egyptians are wondering why we have permitted it to go so long unchecked. It may be unfortunate that I should ask for removal of a political agitator at present moment, but Saad, in view of insidious character of his propaganda, is more dangerous than those interned at Malta since beginning of war. I recommend his immediate arrest and deportation,

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33 Cheetham to Curzon, March 5, 1919, number 98, FO371/3714.

and, for the sake of the Sultan's prestige which is a political interest to us, I would beg for an early decision. 34

By deporting Zaghlūl, Cheetham and his advisers thought they could rid Egypt of the troublesome nationalism which seemed to be gaining adherents. They failed to foresee that in removing the leading Nationalist leaders they would precipitate the riots and chaos which they had worked so hard to avoid since the Armistice.

Acting on Cheetham's request, Graham immediately drafted a reply in which he assented to Zaghlūl's deportation to Malta. This decision was taken in accord with Curzon and Robert Cecil. Graham ordered Cheetham not to deport 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī or any more Egyptians than was necessary to keep the peace<sup>35</sup>. On March 8, Zaghlūl, Ṣidqī, Maḥmūd, and Ḥamad al-Bāsil were arrested and were put on a ship sailing for Malta on the next morning. Although Fu'ād expressed his gratitude to the British advisers for ridding him of Zaghlūl<sup>36</sup>, the men had no sooner been deported than the British advisers began to doubt the wisdom of their action. Cheetham wondered if the Egyptians might not sympathise with Zaghlūl and his friends, but remained in doubt as to the extent the deportations would effect the populace<sup>37</sup>.

34 Cheetham to Curzon, March 6, 1919, number 348, FO371/3714.

35 Foreign Office to Cheetham, March 7, 1919, number 309, drafted by Graham, seen by Curzon and Cecil, FO371/3714.

36 Kedourie, 'Sa'ad Zaghlūl and the British', p. 143. Kedourie discusses Fu'ād's co-operation with Zaghlūl, but notes his desire to use the movement for his own purposes. By March, Fu'ād obviously feared the movement had grown too strong and threatened his position.

37 Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 9, 1919, number 364, received March 12, 1919, FO371/3714.

Wingate was isolated from the Foreign Office throughout the days preceding Zaghlūl's arrest. He took no part in the decision to deport the leaders, and, in fact, noted in a letter to Hardinge on May 10 that Curzon and Graham were too occupied to see him<sup>38</sup>. As Wingate was High Commissioner of Egypt, his advice was theoretically that which should have been adopted, but it is evident that Curzon and Graham acted independently and did not even consult regularly with him. If Wingate was aware that he was gradually being shifted away from the focus of power, and relegated to the position of a political cypher, he did not reveal the fact in his private correspondence. In his letters to Hardinge, he mentioned that before returning to Egypt he wanted a brief holiday in Scotland<sup>39</sup>. Wingate even suggested that Allenby could offer useful advice when he visited Paris in March, while also recommending that a Royal Commission be sent to Egypt to study the situation and make proposals for the future administration<sup>40</sup>. From these letters, it is obvious that Wingate expected to resume his work in Cairo after a short interval. The Egyptian press had also reported that Wingate was expected to arrive in Egypt in the middle of March<sup>41</sup>.

Not until Zaghlūl had been deported, did Wingate write a note on the Egyptian situation. In this note, dated March 9, Wingate wrote that Zaghlūl's

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38 Wingate to Hardinge, March 10, 1919, HP, Vol. II (40), 1919.

39 Ibid. Stamfordham, private secretary to the King, wrote to Wingate, March 8, 1919, to say that he trusted he would take a holiday before returning to Cairo. SA237/1.

40 Wingate to Hardinge, March 10, 1919, HP, Vol. II(40), 1919.

41 al-'Adl, February 3, 1919.

deportation would produce a temporary reaction in favour of the British and would facilitate forming a new Ministry<sup>42</sup>. Wingate wanted a new Ministry to be formed immediately, because he disliked the idea of the British governing Egypt solely under martial law. Although he realised there was a possibility that Rushdī might organise opposition against a new Ministry, he felt that the former Prime Minister could be managed. In this note, Wingate reiterated his request that a Royal Commission be dispatched in the autumn to have discussions with moderates, thereby creating Anglophile sympathies. As the note indicates, Wingate thought that the formation of a Ministry was the major problem facing British officials. Like most British administrators, Wingate did not expect that the Nationalists could initiate nation-wide demonstrations, or that discontent was so prevalent as to produce mass participation.

However, the British officials had misjudged the extent of the organisation of the Nationalists. When Zaghlūl and his friends were arrested, they were detained overnight in prison, and then taken to the ship Caledonia which transported them to Malta<sup>43</sup>, but their movement did not die with their absence from Egypt. The central committee (lajna markaziyya), under the leadership of Maḥmūd Sulaymān, was left in charge, while the councils

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42 Wingate note on the Egyptian situation, March 9, 1919, made official in the Foreign Office, FO371/3714.

43 Ismā'īl Ṣidqī, Mudhakkarātī (Cairo, 1950), p. 19.

throughout the countryside were informed on the situation<sup>44</sup>. When the news of Zaghlūl's arrest became known in Cairo, the students immediately filled the streets and began demonstrating in his favour. They were joined by workers and groups of women. The first demonstrations in Cairo on March 10 were dispersed by the city police, who drove directly into the crowds. The damage was fairly great, and disciplinary measures were promptly considered by the British.

While the demonstrators were shouting in the streets, the Sultan and the Residency received petitions from Nationalist groups<sup>45</sup>. Even these did not alarm officials, who were assured by Richard Wellesley, an Inspector in Lower Egypt, that the better class Egyptians were against the Nationalists, as were the fellahin. By June, Wellesley was to report that the entire country was in chaos<sup>46</sup>. Throughout the week following the deportation of the Nationalist leaders, the rioting continued and was made more extensive by strikes among clerks in the Ministries of Public Works and Education. Workers in Public transport and the Canal zone also went on strike. Transportation and communication lines were particularly heavily damaged, and it soon became evident that there was a co-ordinated attempt to disrupt communications in Egypt. When the strikes and riots showed signs of spreading into the

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44 Anīs, p. 11. al-Rāfi'ī, discusses the riots and their consequences, pp. 127-90.

45 Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 10, 1919, number 368, FO371/3713; FO141/773.

46 Ibid., Graham minute. Wellesley to Graham, June 27, 1919, FO371/3718.

provinces, Cheetham admitted:

Without wishing to exaggerate results of present disturbances...there is a perceptible movement towards disorganising of Government machinery results of which if it continued would be serious. 47

In fact, the demonstrations showed no signs of abating. Rather, they tended to increase after the first deaths caused by the riots occurred on March 11.

To counteract this dangerous development, Cheetham recommended that the Commander-in-Chief should send British detachments to the provinces to restore law and order.

To explain the position of the British advisers, Cheetham wrote privately to Graham.

When Saad Zaghlul began his campaign of intimidation I felt quite certain that drastic action had to be taken at once and I believe that this view has since been universally approved here. If we had left the Nationalists alone any longer Saad would have become the moral dictator, and his hold on the educated classes would have been still more difficult to get rid of. As I hope will have been apparent from my telegrams, we have had to deal both with student disturbances, which have been joined by roughs and resulted in rioting, and at the same time with an arranged scheme of the Nationalists to prevent the Public Services from working.

...The country has really been governed by the Advisers for three and half months, and the situation without the Ministers is therefore in reality less extraordinary than it would appear. 48

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47 Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 11, 1919, , number 378, received March 15, 1919, FO371/3714.

48 Cheetham to Graham, March 12, 1919, FO371/3714.



Graham remarked that this letter had been written prior to the extensive rioting<sup>49</sup>. Actually, rioting was widespread by the twelfth when the letter was written. In fact, Cheetham himself had wired the Foreign Office that he was sending troops to quell the trouble. Both Cheetham and Graham were attempting to justify the deportation of Zaghlūl, which had been the immediate cause of the demonstrations. Graham was, therefore, supporting the man whom he had criticised a few years before for being slow and inefficient<sup>50</sup>.

By March 15, Cheetham and his advisers realised that the military authorities could not immediately halt the rioting. They were forced to admit that matters were out of control, and would continue to be. Every effort was made to restore order, but the Nationalist fervour had spread throughout Egypt. Strikes, largely organised by 'Abd al-Raḥmān Fahmī, a close associate of Zaghlūl, continued to paralyse business and transport. Students led the protests, and public education virtually ceased<sup>51</sup>. Owing to the loss of public order, and the continued rioting, Cheetham asked if the Nationalists could travel to London: this was, then, a return to the policy

49 Ibid., Graham minute.

50 Above, Chapter II, p. 39.

51 These demonstrations were reported in the Egyptian press, which was generally favourable to them. Al-Muqaṭṭam, however, demeaned the demonstrations and reported that they were composed predominantly of 'riff-raff'. Nationalist papers, al-Niẓām, and al-Ahrām, were frequently censored. Edward Atiya, An Arab tells his story (London, 1946), tells of Victoria College in Alexandria, which remained open during the riots, and whose students continued to attend. The attitude of the author and of his teachers indicates how far removed the British teachers and their students were from the political situation in Egypt. They remained almost totally isolated from the riots.

advocated by Wingate in November. Cheetham's telegram was relayed to Balfour in Paris. Following this, Curzon wrote to Balfour on March 16 that the situation in Egypt was 'anxious',<sup>52</sup> and could become critical. In spite of the worsening situation, Curzon was opposed to granting concessions to the Nationalists, although he did recognise that the officials in Egypt might not be able to control the situation. Lest this occur, Curzon recommended the following:

Had Allenby been in Egypt I should have placed him in full charge. But I understand that he arrives in Paris tomorrow and will not be free to return for a few days. Will you consult with him, as to steps to be taken? I understand that there are plenty of troops in Egypt and that there need be no military anxiety. May I be favoured with immediate reply. 53

This was the second occasion that Allenby's name had been suggested as the individual to govern Egypt, but Curzon did not wait to receive Balfour's response concerning the matter. Rather than delay the decision until Balfour's advice arrived, Curzon accepted Graham's telegram to Cheetham which refused permission for the Nationalists to leave Egypt.

It must be remembered that these leaders have committed themselves to sever the British connection with Egypt; there is, therefore, no common ground on which we can meet them for discussion. Moreover, to allow them to proceed here after the recent events you have reported would make it appear that we were yielding to force when persuasion had failed of its effect. 54

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52 Curzon to Balfour, March 16, 1919, FO371/3714.

53 Ibid.

54 Foreign Office to Cheetham, March 17, 1919, number 349, FO371/3714. Curzon added that this telegram 'will do very well'.

In this telegram, sent on March 17 at 11:15 p.m., Cheetham was ordered to restore law to the country, to repress the rioting, and to encourage reasonable Egyptians. As regards future policy, the British government was to consider all the possibilities, but had not yet decided upon a definite course of action.

The Foreign Office did not receive Balfour's directive until the next day at noon - one day after Curzon had taken the initiative and refused concessions to the Nationalists. In his dispatch, Balfour agreed that law and order had to be promptly restored, but was not altogether opposed to offering concessions.

... in the meantime there need be no concealment of our readiness, after this has been satisfactorily accomplished, to discuss in London...grievances with Egyptian Ministers. If they think their task would be better performed if they were accompanied or immediately followed by persons qualified to represent the nationalist case even in its extreme form, I can see no objection. 55

In a private addendum to Curzon, Balfour added that this advice was the best he could offer owing to his incomplete knowledge of Egypt, and the dearth of informed officials in Paris. Graham concluded from the remark that Balfour was placing the matter into Lord Curzon's hands, and that further reference to Paris was unnecessary. He steadfastly maintained that the Foreign Office would not allow the Nationalists to leave Egypt, as to do so would constitute

a reversal of past policy and weaken British standing in the Middle East<sup>56</sup>. Curzon concurred, although he was unlikely to disagree, since he and Graham had taken matters into their own hands before Balfour's moderate advice had been received.

On March 18, the Foreign Office received Cheetham's dispatches (nos. 400 and 403). The first noted that Cairo and Ṭanṭā, centres of Nationalist discontent, were fairly quiet, but that the rioting had spread into other provinces. In Allenby's absence, General Bulfin took command, but Cheetham still felt that they did not have enough troops. On March 17, a huge demonstration in Cairo of teachers, students, workers, and lawyers started from al-Azhar and worked its way to Abdin Palace<sup>57</sup>. On March 18 a surprise attack on a train in Dayrūt ended with eight British soldiers being killed. This incident resulted finally in 91 charges against Egyptians and 34 death sentences<sup>58</sup>; it also aroused British officials to the danger inherent in the Egyptian situation. News of these incidents did not reach London until March 19. In the interim, Graham had been reassured by Cheetham's telegrams (nos. 400 and 403), which had been sent before he had received the refusal to permit the Nationalists to leave Egypt<sup>59</sup>.

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56 Ibid., Graham minute.

57 al-Rāfi'ī, p. 152.

58 Ibid., Allenby to Curzon, July 10, 1919, FO141/629.

59 Graham minute on Cheetham dispatch, March 16, 1919, number 400. Received on March 18, 1919, FO371/3714.

This refusal did not arrive in Egypt until March 19 at 11:12 a.m. The delay in delivery was partly caused by the disruption of the telegraph service after the lines had been cut. Thus Cheetham's more optimistic reports had been written based on the assumption that concessions would be offered.

If we are to make some concessions we should act as quickly as possible.

I think some concession is necessary, but its nature appears to me to depend on general position in Paris.

We should be able to count on support from moderates if a new and definite situation could be announced.

There may be grave objections to such a decision, but we cannot neglect the strength and universality of sentiment which supports the deputation.

...I should make it clear that present movement in Egypt is national in the full sense of the word. 60

After receiving the rejection of the Foreign Office for concessions, Cheetham appealed for the matter to be reconsidered. This appeal is an example of an attempt to remove the blame for the Nationalist disturbances from the British. It also tacitly agreed with Wingate's predictions.

No one in Egypt at that time could have believed that actual insurrectionary outburst was possible. Its sudden appearance and rapid growth is astonishing to the oldest members.

...British officials incline to the belief that whatever National instigation there may have been in the last few months the feeling now exhibited must have been growing during several years, and that an explosion at some time was inevitable.

...A concession if it can be devised which would facilitate such an understanding, and equally lighten the task of governing Egypt in the future is in my opinion urgently needed. 61

After receiving this appeal, Graham admitted that the situation was more serious than he had anticipated, but felt that if the movement were nationalist, then it would have broken out eventually, and that it was better that it had done so while British troops were stationed in the country<sup>62</sup>. Graham drafted a telegram to Balfour reporting the deterioration of the situation. He suggested that the officials in Paris consult with Allenby, who was due to arrive in Paris on March 19.

I am sure that you will agree that his early return to Egypt is advisable and I trust therefore that you can arrange that his business in Paris should be expedited and that he should be able to leave for Egypt by the end of the week. 63

It was also reported that Wingate and the military authorities had been consulted.

Although this was reported to Paris, the officials were not, in fact, in contact with Wingate who was in Scotland; nor had he been consulted during the crucial days between March 16 and March 18. The Foreign Office did not wire for Wingate to return to London until March 19<sup>64</sup>. On that morning, Wingate had written that he was available at any time, and that Graham knew how to contact him<sup>65</sup>. Having received orders to return to London, Wingate

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61 Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 19, 1919, number 408, FO371/3714.

62 Foreign Office to Balfour, March 19, 1919, FO371/3714.

63 Graham to Wingate, March 19, 1919, SA237/2.

64 Wingate to Graham, March 19, 1919, SA237/2.

65 Wingate to Graham, March 19, 1919, SA237/2.

replied that he would arrive at the Foreign Office on Thursday, March 20, between eleven and twelve in the morning<sup>66</sup>. He wrote to Cheetham, at the same time, that he wished that the Foreign Office had agreed to the policy originally advocated in November, thereby avoiding the difficulties which had arisen in March<sup>67</sup>.

When he returned to London on March 20, Wingate was aware that he had little or no official support. Symes, his secretary, had been in London canvassing opinion throughout Wingate's absence, and wrote on three occasions to report that most officials believed Wingate's return to London had been a prelude to voluntary resignation. When this did not happen, the officials decided to keep Wingate in London for as long as possible. Symes reported that many officials thought that the administration in Egypt needed to be changed, but that with the outbreak of violence Wingate's chances of returning to Cairo improved. He informed Wingate that Lloyd George, who would have the final word on the matter, depended upon Balfour, who was influenced by Robert Cecil<sup>68</sup>. On March 18, Symes wrote that Allenby was to discuss the Palestine issue when he arrived in Paris, but that he would also be questioned concerning Egypt. Symes believed that Graham and Cecil wanted Allenby to return to Egypt.

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66 Wingate to Graham, March 19, 1919, SA172/5.

67 Wingate to Cheetham, March 19, 1919, SA172/5.

68 The disagreements between Edward Cecil and Wingate have been noted, Chapter V, pp.119-23. As previously mentioned, Robert Cecil had decided in January that Allenby was a suitable successor. Chapter VI, p. 188.

Cecil supported Allenby because of his great personal prestige, while Graham opted for Allenby because he thought a military man would deal resolutely with the Nationalists<sup>69</sup>. Graham may also have had personal designs on the position and entertained the hope that Allenby would make a good temporary High Commissioner.

From Paris, Hardinge wrote that he and Balfour had discussed granting concessions after Cheetham's recommendation. Hardinge emphasised that Curzon had consulted them, and that the officials had all agreed that law and order had to be restored before concessions were granted<sup>70</sup>. Balfour's telegram of March 18, which permitted concessions, was not mentioned to Wingate, nor was he aware of until much later. It is possible that even Hardinge and Balfour did not realise that Curzon had rejected the concessions prior to receiving instructions from Paris. Certainly Wingate's advice was not considered by officials in Paris or in London. After his note on Zaghlul's deportation on March 9, he was excluded from policy formation. His effective functioning as High Commissioner ceased after his advice was rejected following his interview with Curzon on February 17.

On March 19, General Allenby, the greatest British hero to emerge from the First World War, arrived triumphantly in Paris to consult with Lloyd George and Balfour. In the course of these discussions, Allenby was given the

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69 Symes to Wingate, March 12, 1919; March 13, 1919; March 18, 1919, SA172/5.

70 Hardinge to Wingate, March 19, 1919, SA237/3; HP, Vol. II(40), 1919.



post of Special High Commissioner to Egypt with the duty of restoring order.

On the day Wingate returned to London, the Foreign Office received directives from Balfour in Paris to prepare an:

immediate letter of appointment for General Allenby on lines indicated in my 540 and telegraph text here and to General Allenby en route. He is most anxious to receive formal letter as soon as possible. 71

Officials in the Foreign Office asked where telegram number 540 was to be found, and were informed that it was a private one from Balfour to Curzon<sup>72</sup>.

It is not found in the Foreign Office files, but may be in Curzon's private papers. The text of the communication was undoubtedly to the effect that Allenby had been appointed as Special High Commissioner. Curzon secured the King's formal assent to the appointment by telephone, and drew up the letter requested by the men in Paris<sup>73</sup>. This letter, dated March 21, gave Allenby, in the absence of the High Commissioner, full military and civil authority in his capacity as Special High Commissioner<sup>74</sup>. Allenby promptly left for Egypt where he arrived on March 25. The Egyptian press announced his arrival on the next day, along with articles on the continued rioting and demonstrations. Allenby was referred to as nā'ib al-malik, the same phrase which was applied to the regular High Commissioner: Wingate was not

71 Balfour to Foreign Office, March 20, 1919, number 541, received March 21, 1919, FO371/3714.

72 Ibid., A.T. Loyd minute.

73 Ibid., Curzon minute.

74 Foreign Office to Allenby, March 21, 1919, FO371/3714.

mentioned<sup>75</sup>.

Wingate was officially informed of Allenby's appointment in a letter written by Balfour on March 20, which stated it made 'no technical change'<sup>76</sup> in Wingate's position. Ironically, almost the same words were added to the telegram sent to Cheetham, informing him of Allenby's appointment<sup>77</sup>. Hearing that he had been superseded by Allenby, Wingate wrote to Curzon that he was prepared to return to Egypt at any time<sup>78</sup>. To this letter, Graham minuted that Wingate was to be told that his services were required in London<sup>79</sup>. After Allenby's appointment, Wingate wrote a lengthy note on the Egyptian situation giving his advice for future action<sup>80</sup>. He recommended the sending of 10,000 British troops, marines from the Mediterranean Fleet, and the 26th Division from Dobrudja. He felt that prompt repressive measures should be adopted, but that the sending of a Royal Commission should also be considered. Curzon marked the passage concerning repressive measures with a large 'X' for he sincerely agreed with this emphatic statement<sup>81</sup>. Before Allenby's arrival in Egypt, British officials in London and Cairo

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75 al-Muqattam, al-Ahrām, al-Nizām.

76 Balfour to Wingate, March 20, 1919, number 548, received March 21, 1919, SA237/3.

77 Foreign Office to Cheetham, March 20, 1919, FO371/3714.

78 Wingate to Curzon, March 21, 1919, SA237/10; FO371/3714.

79 Ibid., Graham and Curzon minutes.

80 Wingate note on Egyptian situation, March 21, 1919, FO371/3714.

81 Ibid., Curzon minute.

obviously intended to increase the number of soldiers in Egypt and to employ force to stop the disturbances. Cheetham wired that the 'situation had developed considerably ... [and] drastic military action is now justified and unavoidable.'<sup>82</sup> Graham agreed that the situation was gloomy, but thought Cheetham was exaggerating<sup>83</sup>. Wingate tried to placate Cheetham by telling him that Allenby's arrival would improve the situation. As a last gesture, Wingate suggested that Allenby should live in the Residency and use the appointments which had been left behind when the Wingates hurriedly departed<sup>84</sup>.

In letters written after Allenby's appointment, Wingate suggested that the British government should issue a proclamation which would promise concessions after the instigators of the riots had been appropriately punished<sup>85</sup>. To Allenby, Wingate wrote that he wished that the officials in London had sanctioned his return to Egypt, for he was certain that together they could evolve a just settlement. It was particularly goading to Wingate, himself an army officer, that Allenby had been appointed largely for his military stature. He cautioned against making concessions to the Nationalists. Wingate justified his reversal from his former position in the following manner:

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- 82 Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 20, 1919, number 4 1, FO371/3714. War Office to Commander-in-Chief, Constantinople, March 19, 1919, ordered the preparation of the 26th Division. War Office to Commander-in-Chief, Egypt, March 19, 1919, suggested reinforcements. The G.O.C. in Egypt told the War Office, March 23, 1919, that the Nationalist organisation was deeply rooted and well planned. FO371/3714.
- 83 Ibid., Graham minute.
- 84 Wingate to Cheetham, March 22, 1919, received March 26, 1919, FO141/773.
- 85 Wingate to Hardinge, March 23, 1919, seen by Balfour, HP, Vol. II(40), 1919.

When I failed to carry my point the psychological moment for making concessions had passed. To give way now, after the agitators have been guilty of every sort of breach of law and order, might produce temporary tranquillity, but when extremists know that they can terrorise our government by lawless methods, they will unhesitatingly resort to them again whenever they cannot get their way. 86

To his personal copy of this letter, Wingate later attached a note to the effect that he had written because he wanted to warn Allenby who 'really knew nothing of the situation'<sup>87</sup>. Wingate thought that Allenby ignored the advice, probably on official suggestion. As will be explained, Allenby acted on his own judgement and by granting concessions incurred the wrath of Curzon and others in the Foreign Office. Wingate's volte face may, in some degree, have been caused by his realisation that Curzon and Graham supported a strong British policy and the maintenance of the status quo. By advocating retaliation and the punishment of the Nationalists, Wingate may have hoped to improve his standing in the Foreign Office circles, and thereby to increase his chances of returning to Cairo.

Allenby, for his part, seems to have gone to Egypt with an open mind as to what course to adopt against the Nationalists<sup>88</sup>. Informed observers surmised that Allenby was influenced by Clayton, who was judged to be an uncertain

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86 Wingate to Allenby, March 23, 1919, SA162/1.

87 Ibid.

88 Allenby to Foreign Office, March 27, 1919, number 443, FO371/3714. 'I do not regard myself as committed to act with any section of opinion. It is too early to know results of declaration of maintenance of protectorate implied by terms of my appointment.'

quality in crucial times<sup>89</sup>. At any rate, Clayton met Allenby in Alexandria and was later given the important position of Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior. Clayton had supported Wingate's suggestion that Zaghlūl should go to London; he probably continued to think that this was the best solution to the problem<sup>90</sup>.

Matters promptly improved when Allenby entered Cairo. The official correspondence was no longer full of dire predictions concerning the rioting, while requests for military aid and additional troops ceased entirely. On March 26, Allenby invited a group of Egyptians to the Residency, where he delivered an address ordering a return to law and order. The military authorities issued warnings that outrages were prohibited and would be severely punished. Upon Allenby's behest, a group of 'ulamā', ex-ministers, and Nationalists signed a statement urging the Egyptians to stop the demonstrations. That these men agreed to sign such a statement indicates that the demonstrations had spontaneously grown beyond the control of the Nationalists<sup>91</sup>. In reply to this statement, the wafd sent a long, but moderate memorandum which noted that the disturbances had been caused by the 'general feeling that Egyptian views have not been allowed expression.'<sup>92</sup>

Because of this statement and the quelling of the rioting, Allenby recom-

89 Symes to Wingate, March 18, 1919, SA172/5.

90 Clayton to A.P. Wavell (Lt.-Col. with Egyptian Expeditionary Force, 1917-1920; later 1st Viscount Wavell), March 20, 1919, SA473/3. Clayton Diary, January-March 1919, SA473. Clayton memorandum on Egyptian situation, March 18, 1919, SA473/3.

91 al-Muqattam, March 27, 1919. Signatories included: Rushdī, 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, Luṭfī al-Sayyid, George Khayyat, Yūsuf al-Naḥḥās, and Ḥāfiẓ 'Afīfī.

92 Allenby to Foreign Office, March 31, 1919, number 465, FO371/3714.

mended on March 31 that any 'respectable Egyptian who wished to do so be allowed to travel to Europe'<sup>93</sup>. This request was sent directly to the Foreign Office and to Balfour in Paris. Whereas Wingate only wrote to the Foreign Office, and then in moderate, sometimes vacillating terms, Allenby took matters firmly in hand, and expected prompt action. It is important to remember that Allenby was a war hero; both Egyptians and Europeans hailed him as a military victor. For these reasons, he was able to demand more from British politicians than Wingate had done. As Balfour expressed the matter to Wingate:

The somewhat unexpected emergence of violent and widespread sabotage would seem to demand the peculiar combination of great military prestige with the civilian moderation and firmness which General Allenby possesses in a very rare degree.

So long then for as General Allenby is dealing with the existing crisis your services will hardly be required. How long this exceptional period will continue, and what shape the future government of Egypt will take neither I nor any other man can say with confidence. 94

Nonetheless, Allenby's request that the Nationalist leaders should be allowed to leave Egypt shocked the Foreign Office which had expected him to exercise his military powers.

Although Balfour had told Wingate that his services were not required while Allenby was in charge of the crisis, Wingate was consulted after Allenby's unexpected request was received. Wingate's advice on this occasion may have

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93 Ibid.

94 Balfour to Wingate, March 25, 1919, SA237/3.

been governed by the fact that he realised his weak position; however, he may have felt that to make concessions after the riots was an error. Whatever his motives, Wingate advised that 'before any concession is made to the Extremists they should be required to express their contrition in writing and give pledges for their good behaviour in the future.'<sup>95</sup> This advice was given only a week after Wingate had written to Curzon in justification of his recommendations made in November.

I am of opinion that it is to the credit of these Nationalists that they should have come in the first instance to expose their views to the High Commissioner, thus showing confidence in the Representative of H.M.G.

Had they kept secret their very advanced views which had been strengthened by the issue of the self-determination proclamation for Syria, Palestine, Arabia and Mesopotamia, we might have been face to face with serious revolutionary activities at a much earlier date.

Nationalism has been in the air for the last twenty-five years in Egypt - but its dormant embers were fanned into a bright flame by the great war and the self-determinating [sic] ideas which were so widely propagated during the many months prior to the signature of the Armistice. <sup>96</sup>

However, Wingate only gained the support of Curzon after he adopted a firmer attitude against the Nationalists.

Curzon even mentioned Wingate's advice when he wrote to Balfour to urge him to reject concessions. Of all the men in the Foreign Office, Curzon was, in all likelihood, the most surprised by Allenby's moderation. Only two

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95 Quotation of Wingate's advice on A.T. Loyd minute, April 1, 1919, number 465, FO371/3714.

96 Wingate to Curzon, March 25, 1919, SA237/3.

days before Allenby's request, Curzon had written that he hoped Allenby would not be 'too fierce'<sup>97</sup>. In justification of the Foreign Office, Curzon wrote that it had not been kept well informed on the 'growing estrangement and hostility of the fellaheen'.<sup>98</sup>

Curzon proposed that a mission, headed by Milner, with whom he had spoken privately, should be sent to investigate the Egyptian situation. After receiving Allenby's request for concessions, Curzon objected vigorously to Balfour that the recommendations were identical with those rejected in November and March. Curzon reiterated Wingate's advice against granting concessions after the occurrence of violence. He felt that Allenby had misjudged the Egyptian scene, and that he was unaware of the plan to send a mission<sup>99</sup>. Interestingly, Wingate had proposed the dispatch of a mission as October 20, 1917, and had revived the idea in March 1919, when it was rejected by Graham<sup>100</sup>. In lieu of concessions, Curzon resurrected the idea

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97 Curzon to Balfour, March 29, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/215.

98 Ibid.

99 Curzon to Balfour, April 1, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/216.

100 Wingate to Hardinge, October 20, 1917, HP, Vol. VI(34), 1917. Wingate note, March 9, 1919. Graham minute, 'I do not much like this suggestion. We have brought Sir R. Wingate over here and have invited the Ministers to come... We can hardly suggest, simultaneously, sending a commission to Egypt... It would represent a rather feeble attempt to placate and postpone.' Curzon added: 'I see no ground for such a Commission which would may be interpreted as a mark of weakness.' The mission was also suggested by Bulfin, Cheetham to Foreign Office, March 17, 1919. Parliament members discussed the possibility, too. Walter Guinness to C. Harmsworth, March 27, 1919, FO371/3714.



of a mission, in the hope that it would be accepted instead of Allenby's moderate plan.

This was not the case, for on April 2, Balfour replied that the government could not reject Allenby's advice, since he had just been appointed. While he did not completely reject the idea of a mission, Balfour proposed that the plan should be submitted in a separate telegram to Allenby, not as an alternative to giving passports to the Nationalists<sup>101</sup>. Even though Balfour concurred with Allenby, the Foreign Office was convinced that concessions were neither necessary nor desirable. Graham wrote that he was 'in despair'<sup>102</sup> over Allenby's suggestion. He thought that concessions would achieve 'immediate calm and the eventual loss of Egypt.'<sup>103</sup> Therefore, he urged Hardinge and Curzon to do all in their power to prevent Allenby's policy from being accepted.

On April 1, Wingate, Curzon, and Bonar Law met to discuss the policy of Great Britain in Egypt. Curzon and Wingate argued that to grant concessions was a drastic error, while Bonar Law retorted that the matter could only be decided in the Cabinet. Wingate reported that Curzon went white after Bonar Law said this and did not reply. At this time, Wingate did not know that Balfour had acquiesced on March 18 to grant passports to the Nationalists, nor did he realise that Curzon had rejected the idea on March 17,

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101 Balfour to Foreign Office, April 2, 1919, number 621, received April 3, 1919, FO371/3714.

102 Graham to Hardinge, April 3, 1919, HP, Vol. II(40), 1919.

103 Ibid.

a day before Balfour's advice had been received<sup>104</sup>. Following the meeting, at which nothing definite was decided, Curzon asked Balfour to reconsider Allenby's advice and stressed his inexperience vis-à-vis Wingate's long administrative career.

We have here in Wingate a man whose experience has extended over 35 years, whom you selected to be H.C. who is High Commissioner now, whom we have retained here to advise us in this crisis; and this man... the author of the very policy to which Allenby is apparently a convert, but which has twice been turned down by H.M.G. and yourself - who might therefore a priori have been expected to welcome this indication of his advice, comes to me and says that its acceptance now would be a disaster.

I am not without knowledge of the East myself and this rapid and complete abandonment of our position after the events of the past fortnight will in my judgement have a repercussion that will extend far beyond the borders of Egypt... It will be said that an openly disloyal party has merely to murder Great Britain's officials in order to bring the British Government to its knees and to win its own ends. 105

On the other hand, Bonar Law wrote that Allenby's suggestions were not drastic, although the idea of a mission could be mentioned to him. He expressed his belief that Wingate was not at all suitable to be High Commissioner and made a poor impression<sup>106</sup>. Bonar Law was not the only man to tell Balfour that Wingate was not capable of the work, for, although Curzon was willing to emphasise Wingate's advice when it agreed with his own, he also

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104 Wingate notes on the interview with Curzon and Bonar Law, April 3, 1919, SA227.

105 Curzon to Balfour, April 3, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/216.

106 Bonar Law to Balfour, April 3, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/216; Bonar Law Papers, 101/3/40.

reported that Hogarth, Director of the Arab Bureau, opposed Wingate's return. Hogarth thought that Wingate should not return because the Nationalists believed he had betrayed them<sup>107</sup>. None of the Egyptian memoirs or newspapers refer to this, nor do they indicate that the Nationalist leaders felt Wingate had misled them.

In official circles it was evident, if it had not been so at a much earlier date, that it was impossible for Wingate to return to Egypt; however, he was retained as the nominal High Commissioner.

In answer to the letters of Curzon and Bonar Law, Balfour replied that the Foreign Office was to tell Allenby that it agreed with his request, but also suggested, as an alternative, the dispatch of a mission under Lord Milner. Balfour emphasised that the Foreign Office was to stress its support for Allenby, no matter what decision he took<sup>108</sup>. Allenby replied on April 6.

Outwardly quiet prevails, but Extremist feeling is increasingly violent and dangerous.

...I shall issue tomorrow proclamation to following effect:  
"Now that order has been in great measure restored, I declare in agreement with His Highness the Sultan that there are no restrictions on travel, and that Egyptians who wish to leave the country will be free to do so."

Further I have decided that Saad Pasha Zaglul, Ismail Pashi Sidky, Mohammed Pasha Mahmoud, Hamad Pasha El Basel

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107 Curzon to Balfour, April 4, 1919, Balfour Papers, BM49734; FO800/216.

108 Balfour to Curzon, April 5, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/216. Milner had been suggested by Curzon in a letter to Balfour on March 29, 1919, but he must have asked Milner at an earlier date, because Montagu wrote to Balfour on March 25, 1919, that he had heard Milner was to go. Montagu considered Milner a 'newcomer to Middle East affairs', and wanted the Foreign Office to hold a meeting to discuss the matter. Balfour Papers, FO800/218. Foreign Office to Allenby, April 5, 1919, FO371/3714.

shall be released from internment and be given similar freedom of movement.

I have carefully considered alternative proposal of Commission under Milner. Such a Commission will be desirable later but would be useless now. 109.

Whereas Wingate had asked again and again for the Nationalists to be permitted to travel, Allenby told the Foreign Office and Balfour what he intended to do. The proclamation which allowed the Nationalists to leave Egypt and freed those interned in Malta was published in the Egyptian press on April 7, and was greeted with favourable editorials by the press, and with rejoicing by the populace<sup>110</sup>. Some of the celebrations were so extensive that they had to be halted by British troops, which caused more deaths and damage.

Following the announcement, the Nationalists made plans to present their demands at the Peace Conference. They no longer advocated negotiating directly with the British in London, because they had not been recognised by them. Thus, by refusing to see the Nationalists, the Foreign Office caused the development of what they had hoped to avoid - the presence of the Egyptian Nationalists at the Peace Conference. On April 11, the members of the Committee of 14 still in Egypt left for France, where they joined Zaghlūl, Ṣidqī, Maḥmūd, and al-Bāsil<sup>111</sup>. These men presented the Egyptian case to the members of the Peace Conference, while their supporters in Egypt

109 Allenby to Foreign Office, April 6, 1919, FO371/3714.

110 al-Waṭan, al-Ahālī, al-Ahrām.

111 al-Ahālī, April 15, 1919, to June 19, 1919. The members who went to Paris were: Sa'd Zaghlūl, Muḥammad Maḥūd, Ḥamad al-Bāsil, Ismā'īl Ṣidqī, Maḥmūd Abu'l-Naṣr, Muḥammad 'Alī Bey, 'Alī Sha'rāwī, Ḥusayn Wāṣif, Sīnūt Ḥannā, 'Abd al-'Azīz Fahmī, Ḥāfiẓ 'Afīfī, 'Abd al-Khālīq Madkūr, Wīṣā Wāṣif, and Ḥamid Badr.

continued to organise strikes and demonstrations to underline Egyptian agreement with the wafd.

When Wingate heard that the Nationalists had left Egypt, he asked Curzon what attitude he was to adopt towards them if they approached him<sup>112</sup>. Curzon answered:

I regard them as responsible for the troubles occurring the past three weeks and would have no truck with them.

What Mr. Balfour may wish to do, I have no idea. He, and not I, is responsible for bringing them over, and if he desires to see them the responsibility will be his.

I doubt however their receiving much attention in Paris. 113

In Cairo, Allenby recognised that the policy of permitting the Nationalists to leave Egypt had originated with Wingate, and he wrote to say that he wished that the Foreign Office had assented to the policy in November<sup>114</sup>. Wingate, however, maintained that Allenby and Clayton had erred by granting concessions. The Foreign Office agreed. Hardinge wrote that Great Britain had been deceived by Allenby, who had been appointed to carry out a firm policy against the Nationalists, but who had, once in Cairo, given way to their demands<sup>115</sup>.

While the Foreign Office bemoaned the developments in Egypt, Wingate began to prepare the defence of his policies as High Commissioner<sup>116</sup>. He

112 Wingate to Curzon, April 11, 1919, SA237/3.

113 Curzon to Wingate, April 13, 1919, SA237/3.

114 Allenby to Wingate, April 13, 1919, SA162/2; Allenby to Wingate, April 21, 1919, SA173/2.

115 Wingate note on Allenby letters, 1922, SA162/2. Hardinge to Sir Bulter (Harcourt) Lucknow, April 23, 1919, HP, Vol. II(40), 1919.

116 Ulrich Alexander to B. Patterson, May 18, 1919, SA162/2.

sent letters and a long memorandum concerning his activities in Egypt to the leading persons in the Cabinet and the Foreign Office, and continued to maintain that he was prepared to return to Egypt<sup>117</sup>. Wingate's position was an awkward one, because he was technically still High Commissioner. The Foreign Office hesitated to remove him from office when he had not been responsible for the violence, nor were there personal reasons for which he could be asked to resign. Because he had not been responsible for the rioting, which might have been prevented had his original advice been heeded, Wingate felt he was paying for the mistakes made by the Foreign Office. He demanded to be allowed to resign and to ask for a full judicial enquiry<sup>118</sup>. This made Curzon uneasy, and he wrote to Balfour:

The long-expected has happened, and Wingate, who has been showing symptoms of increasing uneasiness and annoyance at his own position - which I admit is rather equivocal - has now definitely come out with a letter to me.

...Graham did not conceal - as, indeed, he could not - that at one stage, namely that of the early interview with Zaghlul the Foreign Office thought that Wingate might advisely have acted in a different way.

My own inclination, subject to your consent and that of the Prime Minister, is to deal with the case as follows, proceeding always upon the assumption, which I gathered in Paris, that it is not desirable that Wingate should go back as High Commissioner to Cairo. Upon that I believe there is an absolute consensus of opinion... At the same time,

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117 Wingate to Curzon, May 19, 1919, FO371/3717; Wingate to Graham, May 20, 1919, SA162/2.

118 Wingate to Curzon, June 3, 1919, SA173/7. This letter was written after Wingate had complained about his ambiguous position to Graham.

we do not want to present this decision to Wingate in a form that may be at all painful to a man who has had a very distinguished career and is himself quite unconscious at the present moment of having done anything to merit even the slightest animadversion from the government. 119

Curzon suggested that he talk with Wingate, with whom he was on friendly terms, to inform him that the government considered him a valuable public servant, but that Allenby had been sent to Cairo, owing to his military reputation, to restore order. Since normality had not returned to Egypt, the government desired Allenby to remain. Curzon recommended that the government should keep Wingate in London, and confer a peerage upon him.

Balfour dutifully discussed the question of a peerage with Lloyd George, who replied that Wingate could either have a peerage or a full statement of his position - not both. Lloyd George's response did not satisfy Balfour, who thought Wingate had been:

a very valuable and distinguished public servant. He gave specific advice on a difficult problem, warning us that if his advice was not followed, trouble would ensue. His advice was not followed, and trouble did ensue. Thereupon we practically tell him that he is not the man most competent to deal with the situation thus created, and that somebody else must be put in his place!

...Events have turned out most unluckily; and though I do not quite see where we were to blame, I quite understand that he should have an embittered sense of grievance. 120

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119 Curzon to Balfour, June 4, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/217.

120 Balfour to Curzon, June 9, 1919, Balfour Papers, BM49734.

In hopes of lessening Wingate's sense of grievance, Curzon, with Milner's assistance, offered Wingate the governorship of the Straits Settlements<sup>121</sup>. Curzon urged Wingate to accept this position, which he considered was in keeping with Wingate's reputation and past position. Wingate refused, feeling that his acceptance would be interpreted as proof that he had erred during his tenure as High Commissioner<sup>122</sup>. Curzon never understood Wingate's refusal. He acted coldly to him thereafter, and denied help when he subsequently had difficulty in securing his pension or other governmental employment.

The summer months dragged by for Wingate, who technically remained High Commissioner. Although he wrote repeatedly to the Foreign Office for an explanation of his suspension, the officials there were too occupied with other tasks to attend to his persistent complaints. Nor were they willing to admit the responsibility for the decision to reject Wingate's advice. Curzon and Graham were the two men chargeable for the formation of policy for Egypt, but Curzon, and Balfour, disavowed their responsibility for rejecting Wingate's recommendation<sup>123</sup>. In September, an official at the Foreign Office asked if Wingate had been informed that he was no longer High

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121 Curzon to Wingate, July 23, 1919, SA237/10.

122 Wingate to Curzon, July 23, 1919, SA237/7. Curzon to Wingate, October 4, 1919, SA238/1.

123 Balfour to Wingate, September 22, 1919, SA237/7. Curzon to Wingate, October 4, 1919, SA238/1.



Commissioner<sup>124</sup>. Hardinge replied that he should be informed that his appointment was terminated, and he should be praised for his 'long and most meritorious service.'<sup>125</sup>

While Wingate's dismissal was being discussed in the Foreign Office, Allenby was in London to confer about the Milner Mission. Originally, Allenby had wanted the Mission to arrive soon after the Nationalists had left for Paris<sup>126</sup>. Curzon proposed that it should not take the form of a Royal Commission, but closely parallel Dufferin's Mission<sup>127</sup>. Members of Parliament had become interested in the Mission, and were continually asking who was to participate in it and when it was to be sent<sup>128</sup>. Milner, however, absolutely refused to go to Egypt before September, and wanted Allenby to be informed of the fact, since he had desired the Mission to arrive promptly<sup>129</sup>. Allenby was finally told on May 9, 1919, that the Mission would not arrive before autumn. He thought the delay would be acceptable since he had just succeeded in forming a new Ministry under Muḥammad Sa'īd<sup>130</sup>.

124 Minute on Wingate's letter to Balfour, September 18, 1919, FO371/3727.

125 Ibid., Hardinge minute.

126 Allenby to Foreign Office, April 19, April 23, April 25, 1919, FO371/3715.

127 Curzon to Balfour, April 28, 1919, Balfour Papers, FO800/216.

128 Parliamentary Debates, May-June, 1919.

129 Milner to Curzon, May 9, 1919, MP164.

130 Foreign Office to Allenby, May 22, 1919, MP164. Allenby to Foreign Office, May 24, 1919, FO371/3717.

This delay gave the Nationalists time to organise a concerted plan to boycott the Mission, which had been given instructions to investigate the Egyptian situation under the terms of the Protectorate<sup>131</sup>. After a time, Allenby realised that delaying the Mission meant that it would not meet the Nationalists in Egypt, and, by its presence in Egypt, would actually increase the likelihood of disturbances. The Foreign Office contended that it was more important for Milner to head the Mission than for it to arrive during the summer; nor did the officials think that a total boycott was possible<sup>132</sup>.

Once again, the Foreign Office miscalculated the extent of the Nationalist organisation. By the end of the summer it was clear to Allenby that the Mission's arrival would usher in a new series of strikes and demonstrations, for the Egyptians were determined to show their disapproval of the terms of the Mission, and to force the British to negotiate with the wafd. Allenby repeatedly warned of this danger, but the men in London refused to delay the Mission permanently<sup>133</sup>. Milner, who strongly deprecated delaying

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131 The terms for the Mission were given by Curzon in a speech in the House of Lords on May 15, 1919. The Egyptian press objected vigorously to these terms which implied that the Protectorate was to continue. This became the focal point for Nationalist opposition to the Mission. al-Rāfi'ī, Vol. II, 28.

132 Graham minute, May 15, 1919, G.H.Q. reports, May 1919, FO371/3716.

133 Allenby to Foreign Office, August 22, 1919, FO371/3718. Graham to Curzon, September 4, 1919, reported Allenby was determined to delay the Mission. Curzon replied: 'Let him tackle Milner.' FO371/3719.

the Mission, discussed the point with Allenby when he arrived in London. They compromised and agreed to delay the Mission until Allenby returned to Egypt and reported on the situation<sup>134</sup>. There are no minutes on this meeting, but Curzon reported on it on October 3, 1919; therefore, it is probable that it occurred on October 2.

On the same day, Curzon wrote terminating Wingate's appointment as High Commissioner of Egypt. It is apparent that Curzon wished to have the question of the Milner Mission settled before Wingate was removed from office and the title transferred to Allenby. With the problem of the Milner Mission tentatively settled, Curzon felt free to act. He wrote as follows:

When the serious crisis of March...arose in Egypt you were already in this country, having been summoned here in January in order to consult with H.M.G. by whom, no more in all probability than by yourself, was the approach of such a crisis foreseen. In view of the peculiar circumstances of the Egyptian rising and the events by which it was attended, it was thought essential for the restoration of public order and the suppression of organised violence that full civil and military authority should be concentrated in the hands of a single individual.

...It is to be feared that a very disturbing effect would be produced by any change in the existing regime.

His Majesty's Government have therefore decided to appoint Sir Edmund, now Lord, Allenby to be High Commissioner as from October 15th while retaining his supreme military command. 135.

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134 Milner to Graham, August 26, 1919, FO371/3718. Milner to Graham, September 3, 1919. 'Personally I don't care when I go, or whether I go at all. Politically I think postponement is a mistake. True, conditions are not propitious but they will certainly not be rendered any more propitious by dallying.' Curzon to Allenby, September 29, 1919. In this letter, Curzon requested Allenby to meet with Milner, FO371/3719.

135 Curzon to Wingate, October 2, 1919, SA238/1.

Wingate's tenure as High Commissioner to Egypt thus officially ended on October 2, 1919. A long, tortuous battle ensued over his defence of his position and over a just pension settlement<sup>136</sup>. Wingate never held office again, although after much debate he was given a baronetcy in 1920, an honour conferred largely owing to the good offices of Curzon and Milner, both of whom may have felt Wingate had received rather poor treatment from the Foreign Office and Cabinet.<sup>137</sup>

Thus, while the refusal of Wingate's requests meant increased difficulties for the British in Egypt and a prolongation of open agitation, for Wingate the rejection meant defeat, and the loss of his position as High Commissioner. He had the perception, developed from many years of residence in Egypt and the Sudan, to gauge properly the movement led by Zaghlūl, but he could not convince London that he was correct, nor could he deal adequately with local Egyptian grievances. Therefore, his administration of Egypt was of brief duration and ended brusquely when he could no longer formulate policies or retain the confidence of the British government.

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136 Files FO371/3724, FO371/3719, SA175/4 contain Wingate's dossier submitted to the Milner Mission and which is composed of an eight part summary of his work as High Commissioner. Also see: Lloyd George Papers, F48/2/1.

137 Curzon to Lloyd George, December 28, 1919, Lloyd George Papers, F12/2/18.

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